India

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NOTES AND NEWS.

OUR Calcutta correspondent telegraphed on April 7:— "The British Indian Association has presented an address to Sir A. Mackenzie, the retiring Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. The proceeding is strongly condemned by Indian public opinion. The attitude of Sir A. Mackenzie upon the recent Sedition Bill, and his promotion of the Calcutta Municipal Bill, have made him highly unpopular. The Calcutta Municipal Bill has been read a second time in spite of the unanimous protest of all the Indian elected members who were present in the Legislative Council. Indian opinion condemns the Bill as retrograde and subversive of Lord Ripon's policy of local self-government." The telegram reached us too late for publication in our issue of last week. It was, however, circulated to the Press and printed in many journals, including the *Daily Chronicle*, the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Star*, and the *Morning Leader*.

Our readers have heard something of the Bill introduced in the Bengal Legislative Council with the object of depriving the elected Commissioners of the Calcutta Corporation of all real executive power and of vesting that power in twelve virtually irresponsible officials, only four of whom are to be elected by the Commissioners. It is a scheme to knock the elective system on the head after it has been in operation in Calcutta for a quarter of a century. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* describes the method by which the Bill has been introduced. The Lieutenant-Governor determined the main principles of the Bill, obtained the sanction of the Secretary of State for India, and then introduced the measure in council to be approved as a foregone conclusion. Is not action of this kind calculated to reduce the legislative councils to a farce?

The annual return of the net revenue and expenditure of India—known as Sir Henry Fowler's return—has just been issued. It deals with the years 1886-7 to 1896-7. This is a most useful document, and has been considerably improved since it was first published in 1893-4. Something, however, yet remains to be done. In the first place, the object of the return is clearly to show the real cost of government to the people. Yet under Land Revenue, "assignments" are treated as a set-off and deducted from the gross receipts. It is submitted that this is incorrect. Refunds and drawbacks are properly deducted because in these cases the money taken is handed back to the same taxpayer. Again, the charges for collecting the Land Revenue are treated as expenditure, and not as a set-off to be deducted in ascertaining net revenue. This, again, is obviously quite correct. The question, then, is how to deal with "assignments?" In our opinion these ought to be classed with the charges of collection of the revenue, *i.e.*, as expenditure and not as a set-off to receipts (like refunds). For instance, the three-quarters of a crore or so of rupees paid under this heading in the Bombay Presidency to inamdars is not a refund of revenue collected, but an allowance by way of purchase of revenue which had formerly been granted away by the State for service done. It is no relief to the cultivators of the soil to pay land tax to Government where before they paid rent or land dues to State assignees.

Then, too, the charge for "assignments" under salt includes certain payments under treaties and conventions with Native states and others, which should not be treated as a set-off—they do not reduce the amount paid by the people—but as part of the cost of getting in the salt tax. In short, all assignments and compensations (except those under "opium," which is entirely a commercial venture and quite properly treated in the return) should appear on the expenditure side of the amount. This is the most serious criticism we have to make, involving an addition to both sides of the account of about Rx. 1,500,000. There are some minor improvements which we think might be made. We do not understand why the receipts from the Mint should not be treated as those from the Post Office, etc., *i.e.*, as the gain or loss on a commercial service. Again, the treatment of "Miscellaneous" is misleading, as the use of the same word does not at all imply that miscellaneous expenditure can be properly treated as a set-off to miscellaneous revenue. As a matter of fact there should be a heading for "miscellaneous" on both sides of the account, as the two totals of miscellaneous receipts and miscellaneous expenditure are made up of different and unrelated amounts.

The net revenue and expenditure of India as shown by the return for 1896-7 may be summarised as follows:—

Revenue.		*Expenditure.*	
Land, etc.	Rx. 25,406,181	Debt ..	Rx. 2,371,398
Opium ..	3,915,624	Army ..	24,492,356
Taxes ..	28,494,292	Collection of Revenue	6,533,380
Misc. ..	472,188		
Total ..	Rx. 58,288,285	Commercial services	2,555,223
Deficit ..	1,705,022	Civil services	24,040,950
	Rx. 59,993,307	Total ..	Rx. 59,993,307

Commercial services include railway, irrigation, post-office and telegraphs. Civil services include famine relief and insurance, which really ought to have a heading to itself. This account of Rx. 60,000,000 is in some respects a more accurate indication of the cost of the Government of India and of the revenue raised than the swollen Rx. 96,000,000, which appears in the ordinary Finance Account of the Government of India.

Among recent Parliamentary Papers is a Return (procured by Sir Henry Fowler) of a copy of the Despatch addressed by the Court of Directors to the Governments of Bengal and Madras on April 25, 1806, dealing with the coinage of India. The document has more than an antiquarian interest, and, doubtless, Sir Henry Fowler took no little pleasure in calling for its publication. He must have known that this despatch of the hard-headed directors of old John Company, with its robust monometallism, would prove an unwelcome intruder on the cogitations of a Secretary of State with distinct Bimetallist leanings. Perhaps he intended that its publication should act as a much-needed tonic. In any case it is wholesome and timely. In the course of an elaborate review of the Indian currency of that date, with its bewildering diversity of rupees—Sicca Rupees, Benares Rupees, Lucknow Rupees, Bareilly Rupees, Sonaut Rupees, Madras Arcot Rupees, Bombay Rupees, etc., etc.—all of varying degrees of fineness and of value, these old-time experts speak plainly to our modern dabblers in currency heresies:—

> It is an opinion supported by the best authorities and proved by experience that coins of gold and silver cannot circulate as legal tenders of payment at fixed relative values, as in England and in India, without great loss; this loss is occasioned by the fluctuating value of the metals of which the coins are formed.

And again:

> . . . . it must be remembered no regulation or expedient can be devised to keep the coin in any country where the balance of trade is against it, and where to this principal cause of a deficiency in the

circulating medium is added a prevailing disposition on the part of the people to hoard the silver coin; where these circumstances exist, all attempts to force a gold coin where silver only is the common medium will be attended with loss and disappointment.

All of which the members of the new departmental Committee will do well to ponder.

It may be interesting to bring together from recent issues of the *Pioneer Mail* some indications of the progress of the "forward" frontier policy:—

Sir Power Palmer has reconnoitred five miles in advance of Barkai: the local tribesmen all showing friendliness. The road to Swaikot has made such good progress that it will practically be finished to-day.

A report from Wano states two Commissariat grass stacks outside the limits of the fort were set on fire on Monday night. A detachment of troops sent out to extinguish the fire had some shots fired at them. A small party of Waziris are supposed to be responsible for this mischief.

Some further modifications will be made in the military reliefs this season; but orders will not be issued until it is seen what force will have to be maintained on the Peshawar frontier when the Afridi business has been settled.

So, too, we read that the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab lately visited Tochi and "wound up by saying that he presented the Maliks with Rs. 1,000 in commemoration of his first visit." Side by side with these things let us place the following observations of the *Pioneer*:—

It may be noted as a curious and not uninstructive fact that at the very time when our troops are standing ready to enter the Afridi country to inflict further punishment, if necessary, upon the tribesmen, the Afridi company of the 27th Bombay Infantry, now *en route* to Uganda, is the one which has been pushed on ahead by forced marches. Thus the first reinforcements from India that will reach Major Macdonald will be a few score Afridis, kinsmen of those who have fought our troops so stubbornly. This only goes to show how high a value attaches to the trans-frontier Pathans enlisted in the Native army, and we are not sorry that recruiting has once more been opened in the case of the Orakzai and Afridi clans which have submitted.

"Curious and not uninstructive." We agree.

President M'Kinley, describing in the message which he sent to Congress last Monday the effects of misrule and consequent revolution in Cuba, said that the temper and forbearance of the American people had been so severely tried as to beget

a perilous unrest among our own citizens, which has inevitably found expression from time to time in the national Legislature, so that issues wholly external to our own body politic engross attention, and stand in the way of that close devotion to domestic advancement becoming to a self-contained commonwealth whose primal maxim has been the avoidance of all foreign entanglements.

Mutatis mutandis, is not this what the people of India say of the effects of the "forward" frontier policy?

The Famine Commission is holding its sittings in India, and, as we apprehended, its work is giving little satisfaction to the people owing to its narrow scope. The real questions which lie at the root of the poverty of the Indian cultivator—for example, the recurring and excessive assessment of the soil—are left untouched. The Government of India, it appears, is to relieve the impoverished people, not by making its assessments more moderate and equitable, but by a revision of the Famine Code. The assessment has been enhanced in the Central Provinces of India even during the period of the famine, and Lord George Hamilton recently declined, in reply to Mr. Samuel Smith's questions, to postpone the introduction of the enhanced assessment. Can one wonder if, in circumstances like these, the labours of the Famine Commission are fruitless? "Its labours," says the *Champion*, "are a disappointment. Its scope has been so narrowed that in our opinion it is simply a waste of public time and public expense for the Commissioners to go through the farce of investigation."

The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* quotes the following piece of evidence from the proceedings of the Famine Commission:

Sir James Lyall: Death from simple starvation, I suppose, is a very rare thing, because unless you shut a person up in a stone cell or send him to sea in an open boat, long before he dies of starvation he will fill his stomach with something or other which will lead to his death?

Mr. Barrow: I do not know. I have never seen a case of starvation, and have only heard of three, which occurred in the district of Thana, where I have since been working.

Did you see many cases of deaths from famine-diarrhœa?—We had a lot of deaths from diarrhœa; but I put them down as being really due to cholera, which was concealed.

You do not think they were due to people filling their stomachs with bad food, because their ordinary food was not obtainable?—I do not think so. I saw nothing to lead me to believe that such was the case.

The method adopted by Mr. Barrow of putting down all deaths from famine-diarrhœa to cholera may suit the book of the Secretary of State, and perhaps we shall shortly hear him triumphantly declaring in the House of Commons that there were only three deaths on an average in each famine-stricken district from the effects of the famine. But the subject is too serious and our responsibilities in India are too heavy to make such jugglery other than disgusting.

A painfully suggestive contribution to the history of the famine is the report by the Rev. John P. Haythornthwaite of the relief work done in connexion with St. John's College at Agra. One by one, no fewer than 300 waifs and strays have been added to the roll of this benevolent institution, as a consequence of the famine. This is the Secundra Orphanage of pre-Mutiny days. And Agra is but one place among many.

The *Hindu* of Madras is doing good service in its series of articles on the Land Revenue Policy of the Madras Government. It quotes the reasonable prayer of the Godavari District Association that there may be granted "to the cultivators of the soil in this District, and indeed the Presidency, fixity of tenure and a legislative limitation of the Government demand in order to give them confidence in the pursuit of their industry." As matters at present stand, much is left to the discretion of settlement officers, who are not controlled by fixed principles. "*There is no limitation to the possible increase of assessments at revenue settlements.*" The italics are our own. If the statement be accurate it goes far to explain the chronic poverty of cultivators in India outside the permanently settled Provinces.

In a subsequent article the writer quotes from the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885 the grounds on which enhancement of rent can be claimed by landlords in Bengal. "If," he adds, "these are the grounds which the law recognises as adequate and proper for raising the rents in Bengal, we cannot understand the difficulty of the Madras Government in imposing limitations of a similar character upon its own powers of enhancement of land in the case of its own rayats." Of course there is no difficulty. But the Government clearly does not desire to limit its powers of enhancing rents in the way in which it has limited the powers of private landlords in Bengal. The result is the sad and humiliating spectacle that, while in Bengal the tenants of private landlords are virtually protected against famines, elsewhere in India the impoverished tenants of the State landlord are subject to an apparently endless series of famines.

It is not only in the matter of limitations to enhancement that the tenant of the Bengal landlord is better off than the tenant of the State landlord elsewhere in India.

In cases of over-assessment, the legally constituted tribunals come to the rescue of the Bengal tenant, whereas there is no such safeguard in the case of the Government rayat who is practically left to the tender mercies of the Settlement Department at each recurring settlement. If he appeals against over-assessment, his appeal is referred for final disposal to the same officer who has imposed the original assessment.

So, too, when irrigation is undertaken by the Government in permanently settled Bengal, it obtains from the people a rate for the water supplied, and nothing more. In Madras, on the other hand, the Government not only charges for the water supplied, but also enhances rents on account of the improvement made by the introduction of the irrigation system. As the writer whom we have quoted says:

When a separate charge for the irrigation provided by the State has been imposed, it is hardly fair to add to it another and a further charge for any improvement effected in the condition of the soil by irrigation at each revision settlement.

All this has been pointed out over and over again. The Government of India is the landlord over the greater part of India, and the Government will not make laws to limit its demands as it has made laws to limit the demands of Bengal landlords. This pure selfishness on the part of the Government as landlord has its inevitable effect in

impoverishing the people of India and in helping to bring on famine. It required a Gladstone to stand up against the selfishness of Irish landlords and give the Irish tenants some security in rent and tenure. Where is the statesman who will stand up against the Indian Government as landlord, and bestow on its tenants the security that has been granted to the tenants of private landlords in India? We can scarcely expect this achievement from Lord George Hamilton or Sir Henry Fowler. Yet until such security is given, to talk about taking precautions against famines by revising the Famine Code is mere mockery.

The correspondence between the Government of India and the Government of Bombay regarding the plague expenditure, has been published. It shows that the former do not hold themselves liable to lend money to the Municipalities for plague expenses, nor to relieve the Municipalities generally at the cost of the State, nor are they prepared to sanction any considerable extension of the period for the repayment of such loan as may be granted. His Excellency the Governor-General in Council recognises, however, the financial difficulties into which the Government of the Bombay Presidency have been brought by the disasters of this and the past year, and accepts the view of the Government of Bombay that some time must be given for recovery before a true estimate of the possibilities of repayment in each case can be made. He considers, therefore, that for the present loans should be made on a stipulation that the principal will be repaid during the five years from April 1, 1900, to March 31, 1905. Before this period begins, it may be hoped that the Municipalities concerned may have to a large extent recovered their normal position, and it will be possible to judge by the examination of each case whether sufficient cause may exist for an extension of the period of repayment.

With reference to this paragraph, which we take from the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, we have only to say that if a grave national disaster like the plague had visited a European country, the Government of the country would almost certainly have contributed largely towards its relief from Imperial sources. Will the burden in India fall on the unfortunate taxpayers of Bombay and Poona alone? It would be well if some member of Parliament saw his way to framing a question on the subject for the Secretary of State for India.

When the rulers of India are kindly and considerate, they evoke the gratitude of the people to an extent seldom witnessed elsewhere. We have referred before to the grateful eulogies bestowed upon Sir Antony MacDonnell by the people of Oudh and Benares for his famine relief measures and his sympathetic dealings with the people. Even in the administration of plague measures it is possible to be considerate and kind, and such kindness is clearly appreciated. We read, for example, in the Bombay papers that when General Gatacre was in Bombay he never allowed a soldier to enter a house inhabited by Indians, and that he always found the citizens themselves willing to help him in his work. We read also that Colonel Creagh and Surgeon-Major Reade have won the golden opinions of the people of Poona, and that the people expressed their gratitude in a public meeting in the Native General Library on March 9. It is high-handed and unsympathetic rulers who meet with hostile criticism, and they succeed in inducing weak men like Lord Elgin and Lord George Hamilton to sanction gagging Acts to silence such criticism.

It is stated that "Lord Salisbury has urged Lord Cromer to accept the office of Viceroy of India, in the place of the Earl of Elgin, who will return to Europe in a few weeks."

Among the first fruits of the new law of sedition in India we may reckon the extinction of two respectable and able vernacular papers, the *Sahachar* of Bengal and the *Arjuna* of the Punjab. In taking leave of its readers, the *Sahachar* mentions the new Law as the main reason for its discontinuance. The Government of the day may possibly congratulate itself on this result. But those who know the moderation and ability with which this paper has, during the past twenty-five years, endeavoured to place the views of the people before the Government can only regret that one of the truest friends of British rule in India has been killed by the repressive and foolish acts of British administrators.

The Bombay Government has issued a resolution, dated March 3, dismissing three schoolmasters who took part in political discussions. The resolution lays down the principle that instructors of youth should be wholly dissociated from politics, and that teachers and professors should not take part in political discussions. Is this a wise resolution? Does it not occur to our panic-stricken administrators in India that students are likely to go farther and fare worse in political discussion in the absence of the moderating influence of experienced and responsible instructors? Do these administrators think that it is possible to set back the hand of the clock and to bolster up pure despotism by gagging Acts and resolutions? The mistakes of the Government seem to be creating more difficulties and dangers in India than all the "seditious" writings and discussions of the people.

The *Madras Standard* complains that His Excellency the Governor of Madras has decided to appoint Europeans in preference to Indians as Government translators. The report, if true, is amazing. But it is in keeping with other acts of the present Government. When the appointment of a Native of India as Advocate-General of Madras is vetoed and cancelled, and when new rules are framed for the exclusion of the Natives of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay from the Engineering College at Roorkee, it is consistent enough that Europeans should be appointed to translate articles written in the Indian vernaculars for the information of the Government. But is this the way in which responsible English administrators fulfil the mandate of their Queen to admit the people of India to office without distinction of colour or creed? When Indian papers complain of acts like this, they are, we suppose, "seditious."

It appears from the *Tribune* of Lahore that complaints come from the Central Province as to the disastrous way in which the coolie emigration to Assam is breaking up families, and of the systematic abduction of young girls from their homes. The complaint is an old one. The penal laws provided for the benefit of European tea-planters in Assam have often been described as the slave-law of India. They are not very materially different in their operation from the system of forced labour in South Africa which has lately evoked much indignation. Divisional Commissioners in India have reported on the abuses of coolie recruitment under these laws, and Sir Charles Elliott, late Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, publicly admitted the existence of such abuses. But nevertheless the laws continue. Where the interests of the British capitalist, who has votes, clash with the interests of the people of India, who have none, the latter have almost invariably been sacrificed.

The result of the trial of Anthony Doyle, a private in the Royal Irish Regiment, for murdering a native woman at Jubbulpore is commented upon in most of the Indian papers received by the last mail. The *Pioneer* remarks that the *alibi* on the strength of which the prisoner was acquitted was made for him by the prosecution witnesses, and that the acquittal of the prisoner "was not unexpected." The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* says:—

We do not remember to have ever come across a case in which a European, accused of murdering or committing a gross outrage upon an Indian, man or woman, was convicted by an Allahabad jury. Only the other day we noticed the case of a villager being shot dead by a soldier, stationed at Lucknow; and he was let off, against the testimony of eye-witnesses, who deposed to having seen him deliberately firing at the unfortunate man, on the bare statement of the prisoner that the gun had gone off during a scuffle and killed the villager accidentally.

The facts of this case are said to have been perfectly clear, and the judge thought it necessary in charging the jury to warn them that "they must be most careful not to allow race prejudice to influence their verdict in any way." Whether the jury nevertheless did allow race prejudice to influence their verdict, it is not for us to say. But the almost invariable acquittal of European offenders by European juries in India in cases of murder and gross outrage against Natives is undoubtedly creating a profound and most unfortunate impression.

We reproduce on another page a series of extracts from the Anglo-Indian and the Indian Press upon Sir J. Westland's Budget Statement. Two points in particular are emphasised—(1) official fear of a subvention from the Imperial treasury; and (2) the grossly misleading character of Sir J. Westland's review of the last twenty years of Indian finance. It will be remembered that we called attention to both of these matters in our comments upon the telegraphic summary of Sir J. Westland's Statement.

THE FAMINE IN THE NORTH-WEST PROVINCES.

LAST week we referred briefly to the latest volume of Famine papers, containing the account of the famine in the North-West Provinces and Oudh. We now propose to give a short summary of the salient points in this admirable report. The recent famine followed not one bad harvest alone, but a series of unfavourable agricultural years. In 1892 the country was at a stage of "full normal prosperity." Prices were moderate, and bad harvests in Europe gave an extraordinary stimulus to the Indian export trade. From April, 1891, to June, 1892, the rush of wheat to the seaboard had been in excess of anything formerly known; and it was calculated that during 1892 the Provinces exported surplus grain to the value of nearly four crores of rupees. The winter of 1892-3 was an unusually wet one, and was followed by years of excessive rainfall, which have had no small part in leading up to the recent distress. In 1893 the monsoon rains began early, and continued abnormally heavy. The autumn harvest was generally impaired by the constant rain. Except for rice, which not unnaturally prospered, the yield on the whole was not quite 70 per cent. of the average. The export trade fell away, and some districts had to import grain for local consumption. The year 1894 opened with some promise. The heavy rains of the previous autumn had led to spring sowings, which covered over a million acres more than in 1893. But the winter season was unfavourable in the extreme, and the spring harvest of 1894, like the autumn crop of 1893, showed under 70 per cent. of the average. To an indifferent spring out-turn succeeded a still more unfortunate autumn harvest. Again, the rains were exceptionally heavy, with the result for the Provinces as a whole the estimated out-turn was barely above half of a normal average. Moreover, the year was an extremely unhealthy one for both men and cattle. So heavy and so late were the rains of 1894 that they interfered seriously with ploughing and sowing for the spring of 1895. More unfavourable weather when the crops were ripening reduced them again in most districts to an eight anna yield. During the summer of 1895 distress was beginning to make itself felt among the poorer classes. This time the monsoon ended prematurely, the year was again unhealthy, and the crops markedly deficient. Stocks became depleted, and with the beginning of 1896 prices began to rise. In most districts the staple food grains were 25 per cent. dearer than the normal. The harvest was again deficient—about 65 per cent. of the normal. This was an average for the whole of the Provinces. But the harvest of different localities varied greatly. In the Allahabad division it was 55 per cent., in Jalaun (district) it was 47 per cent., and in Banda 38 per cent. By April prices were approaching famine level. In British Bundelkhand there was actual famine in 1896.

Such then was the preparation for the great scarcity of 1897. The monsoon of 1896 was characterised not only by deficiency of rain but by an abrupt termination a full month before the normal time. Practically no rain fell after August, and the resulting excessive evaporation proved as harmful as deficient rainfall. On September 30, the Government of the North-West Provinces addressed the Government of India and informed them in so many words of the approach of famine. At least the North-West Provinces Government were not caught napping. During the autumn the Local Government wisely bent their energies to induce the people to make the fullest use of the canal system and other means of irrigation—and with such good effect that the irrigated area for the autumn crop rose from a normal of 750,000 acres to 1,250,000, while in the following spring the irrigated area rose from a normal of 1,219,000 acres to 1,880,000 acres. As was reported by the chief engineer in the irrigation department:

> The estimated value of the crops in 1896-7 raised by this irrigation amounts to nearly 13 crores of rupees, a sum which exceeds by 50 per cent. the total cost of the canals. One and a-half million tons of edible produce were rendered available as food for the people—a quantity sufficient to feed for twelve months one-fifth of the entire population of the North-Western Provinces.

But great as were these results in the canal districts, it was in the districts unprovided with canals, which include all Oudh, that the policy of forcing irrigation—in this case by liberal advances from Government for encouraging the construction of *kachcha*, or temporary wells—received its most striking vindication. The moral effect of this wise and energetic policy on the part of the local Government was scarcely less beneficial than the material advantages. The energy of the Government roused the energies of the people and gave them confidence to war with famine. The Government also made liberal advances for the purchase of seed-grain. "It was the *Ikbal-i-Sarkar*," wrote the Collector of Cawnpore, "and to use a colloquial phrase, Government was 'backing its luck.'" Finally the local Government consummated its good work by a really liberal *remission*, not *suspension*—Imperial Government of India please note—of arrears of rent, amounting to 42 per cent. of these arrears. In spite of these liberal and timely measures the extent of the calamity in the North-West Provinces may be dimly realised from the official calculation that "the failure in the autumn and spring harvests of food grains alone cost the Provinces no less than 34½ crores of rupees (equivalent to £23,000,000 sterling)."

This policy of readiness in the North-West Provinces was followed up by a policy of "thorough" when it became necessary to organise a vast system of relief. Thanks to the energy and foresight of this Government the people were well in hand, and instead of costly and unsatisfactory relief works in huge camps, various village projects were started on a liberal scale of relief which proved effective as well as popular. Serious epidemics—the bane of large famine camps—were avoided. The people improved rapidly in physical condition—in marked contrast with the harrowing experience in other parts of India—and when the rains of 1897 began, were able to begin field-work with full vigour.

We must hasten to the conclusion of this instructive and readable Report, noting the generous (and politically wise) distribution of three days' wages as a special grant to those on relief works at the time of the Queen's Jubilee (June 21 and 22 being declared public holidays). "The death-rate is the best test of the sufficiency or insufficiency of a relief organisation." When it is remembered that at one time over a million and a quarter persons were on relief in the United Provinces; the excess death-rate over the decennial average of only 3·26 per mille for the 12 months of famine may be regarded as a final tribute to the success with which the Government of the North-West Provinces combated the famine. "Taking the whole period of 12 months of famine prevalence, the death-rate of 36·30 per mille may be compared with the mortality during the same period in 1893-94 when the provincial death-rate was 38·05 per mille." There is no doubt that in the North-West Provinces the famine was grappled with from the start with foresight, wisdom, and energy in a way which reflects the brightest credit on the local Government. We commend to the careful study of all who take an interest in Indian affairs this simple record of the good work done in the United Provinces in the disastrous year 1896-7.

THE SEPOY MUTINY.[1]

FOR any Englishman who cares to fulfil one of his first political obligations at the present moment—the duty of forming a sound judgment on the right method of governing India—there can be no better preparation than a thoughtful study of the history of the Sepoy Mutiny and of the causes that led to it. Intricate as the story is, the lessons that it conveys stand out plainly enough. And one lesson of practical importance just now is this: the duty of not surrendering our judgments and our responsibilities to experts, whether civil or military. The mistakes that brought about the Mutiny were palpable and gross mistakes—not mistakes about which an expert's opinion alone was of value, but mistakes that must have been apparent to any thoughtful and impartial observer. It is true that no Englishman can study carefully a portion of Indian history without a deepened sense of the difficulties of governing a nation whose ideas and traditions are so different from his own, without intenser admiration for those of his countrymen who have surmounted the difficulties, and intenser sympathy for those

[1] "A History of the Indian Mutiny and of the Disturbances which accompanied it among the Civil Population." By T. Rice Holmes. Fifth edition, revised throughout and slightly enlarged. London: Macmillan and Co., Limited.

who are attempting the task of surmounting them. But neither will he find the slightest warrant for concluding that he must be content to have no opinion on Indian politics, that he must trust to the "experts" who are on the spot, who have the knowledge, and who are bound to be in the right. It was "experts" who, when the Mutiny was in mid-career, clung fondly to the red-tape of their officialism, and represented to a man who was intent on saving a province that his first duty was to attend to the answering of letters. The problems of government are doubtless intricate; but there are fundamental principles of good government which may be mastered by the plain man—principles that are written clearly on many a fateful page of history—yet principles which bureaucracy, with its inevitably narrowing routine, seems destined always to violate.

There are few chapters in the history of the world full of so intense an interest. The workings of Nemesis, the power that turns the prose of history into the poetry of tragedy, are as clearly discernible here as in the story of the Persian Invasion, or the Sicilian Expedition, or the French Revolution. It is strange that Englishmen should need a novel to stir them to interest in the theme. Again and again one feels, as one reads the admirably restrained narrative of Mr. Holmes, that the sober facts are far more eloquent than any amount of melodramatic writing, of ceaseless iteration of phrases and exclamations. The solitary line that is quoted as having continually recurred to one English lady's mind in the days of terrible suspense at Gwalior (p. 147)—"O death in life, the days that are no more"—is fraught with a pathos that comment may spoil but cannot heighten.

Here are two good reasons for a study of the Mutiny; and there is another as important. Nowhere is history more evidently "philosophy teaching by example," not merely in respect of principles of government, but in respect of character. As in some great drama, impressive contrasts of character—the coward, the hero, the irresolute man, the man of "will like a dividing spear," the little-minded official, the man of wide view and prescience and the noblest self-effacement—are continually brought before us. Those who hold with Browning that nothing is so well worth recording as "the history of a soul" may well turn their attention here. For at each phase of the Mutiny those who were called to be actors in it were confronted with one of those supreme crises in life that test a soul, once for all, and show of what heroic stuff or of what common clay it is made.

On the other hand, if the history of the Mutiny presents attractions to the student and to the historian hardly to be matched elsewhere, it also presents the gravest difficulties. This also, if the historian is bold enough, may be reckoned as an attraction; for the difficulties are so obvious that the triumph, if they are surmounted, is notable. The difficulties lie, first, in the enormous mass of material, and, secondly, in the continual conflict of evidence about facts. To anyone who realises the seriousness of these two points, the magnitude of Mr. Holmes's success will be apparent. As to the first, he has succeeded by obeying the principle so admirably laid down by Dr. Arnold at the beginning of chapter 44 of his "History of Rome"—the principle that "military events should only be related circumstantially to after-ages, when they either contain a great lesson in the art of war, or are so striking in their incidents as to acquire the interest of a romance, and thus retain their hold on the imaginations and moral feelings of all ages and countries." As to the second, he has spared no pains in the effort to present a truthful and impartial narrative in his text, and in foot-notes and appendices he has furnished his readers with full references that make the prosecution of further enquiries on disputed points easily practicable. It must also be set down to Mr. Holmes's credit, though it may unfavourably affect the reception of his work in some quarters, that the impartiality for which he has striven is not a colourless one. He fully accepts what we may call the Lord Acton view of history—that she sits in judgment on the actions of men. It is obvious that only one who writes in this spirit can do justice either to the dramatic possibilities of the story of the Mutiny or to the political and moral lessons which it can be made to convey to both states and individuals.

For those who are already acquainted with Mr. Holmes's work in its earlier editions, it will be useful to mention the alterations and additions made in the new. They chiefly relate "to the Afghan War, the battle of Sacheta and the events which led up to it, the battle of Chinhat, the defence of the Lucknow Residency, Havelock's campaign, Lord Canning's Oudh proclamation, and the vexed question of Sir Colin Campbell's responsibility for the protraction of the war." The whole history is comprised in one volume of a convenient size (659 pages), furnished with good maps and plans, which are inserted in such a way that it is possible to read and keep a map open for consultation at the same time. Both in England and in India the book should be widely studied.

THE NEMESIS OF EMPIRE.

By S. H. Swinny.

THERE has been much talk of late about the sufferings of India, and even the most callous have been forced to pity a country afflicted by the dread trinity of famine, pestilence, and war. The coincidence of so many misfortunes has led many to doubt whether our rule is so wise and beneficent as our Indian officials proclaim, while some have come to believe that the poverty of India is increasing as a result of our costly system of alien government. But as yet there are few who perceive that there is another aspect to the question, that we are ourselves becoming entangled in the bonds with which we have bound India, that her misfortunes are ours, and that her ruin may be but the prelude of our own. And still fewer see that there is a radical incompatibility between liberty and empire, that we cannot be irresponsible despots in Asia and free citizens in Europe; and that, even if we escape the material dangers of our present relations with India, we may suffer in a dearer interest, and have to yield to the exigencies of our imperial sway the freedom for which our fathers fought and died.

And in the first place, to begin with those material dangers of which we have spoken, what possibilities of evil lie in the finances of India! We are warned to give no help from the English treasury, even for the expenses of a war beyond the frontier, when in India itself famine has been slaying its thousands and plague is still raging; we have been warned to let neither justice nor pity open our purse-strings, lest the irresponsible official buccaneers, over whom apparently we have no control, should thereby take heart to begin new adventures and plunge all the deeper into that mire of deficit which they already treat so lightly. Rather than shift their burdens on us, let the Indian Government borrow, and borrow, and still borrow. And it can still borrow on easy terms, but not on its own merits—growing poverty, deficits, the limit of taxation already reached, are not the watchwords to draw money from the pockets of investors at three per cent. The Indian Government can borrow because the investor sees behind it the English Government, and believes that, though no formal guarantee has been given, that Government will not be able to turn a deaf ear to its own citizens, as it has just done to the famine-stricken people of India—will not be able to resist the clamour of the creditors of India, the cry of the widow and the orphan in the forefront and the pressure of the great monied interest behind. It is impossible to go on borrowing for ever. That way bankruptcy lies. And in that event the holders of Indian stock will look to the taxpayers of this country. When we think of the sacrifices which have been made by the people of England since the great peace, eighty-three years ago, to reduce the burden of debt, which some day, by the addition of the Indian debt, may at one swoop be raised to what it was after Waterloo, we may well wonder at the indifference of the English to the finances of India, and at the heavy price they may have to pay for the pleasure of managing other people's concerns, and the glory of holding a world-wide Empire.

But there are dangers more imminent than these. Already we hear of the weakness of our army and the necessity of some form of conscription. Our army at home has for some time tended to become nothing more than the depôt of our army abroad, the recruiting ground of our levies for India, and in spite of our increasing expenditure, it is doubtful if, under the present system, it will ever be much more. And now we have definite proposals to recognise this and to form a new home army out of a reorganised militia, recruited by compulsory

service. It is sought indeed to sweeten the bitter draught by excusing the volunteers, which means that the labouring class are to be compulsory militiamen and all the others compulsory volunteers; but this is a distinction too redolent of class privilege to be maintained for any length of time. In contact at all points with the belated rivals of our colonial supremacy, while the flower of our armies is perishing in the wild hills beyond the Indian frontier, and an irresponsible and uncontrollable military authority in India is bent on continuing the policy of adventure, we are fast being pushed to the conscription. And when that is accepted, we lose all that has most distinguished us from the military nations of the Continent. We suffer an inroad on our liberties which will be felt in every village and every household in the land. The labourer and the mechanic must leave their work, to risk the loss of habits of steady industry and of the skill acquired with such difficulty, that more troops may be set free to perish in Afghan passes, or aid in new schemes of aggression. We propose to sacrifice a part of the life of each citizen on the altar of this Moloch of Empire, to find only when the sacrifice has been made, how terrible a god we have been worshipping.

But this is not all. The theories of government and of law which are adopted in India cannot fail to react on the government and laws of England. Those who condone arbitrary action in the one country, will soon find it creeping upon them in the other. It is only some nine years since all liberal Europe was celebrating the hundredth anniversary of the fall of the Bastille, and we can all remember how Press and platform resounded with the self-satisfied assertion that we of the present century were not as the French of the old *régime*. To whatever extent the Revolution had failed to fulfil the hopes of its supporters, it had at least—so all were agreed—put an end for ever to *lettres-de-cachet* and arbitrary imprisonment. Nor were the English slow to point out that in their happier country such proceedings had been illegal from a much earlier period. And yet now, within three years of the close of the nineteenth century, we find in England's greatest dependency arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, without set charge, public trial, or definite term, recognised as a legal and normal method of procedure, for which some vague and unsubstantial allegations of public danger are a sufficient justification. This is what the English Government of India in the nineteenth century leaves as a legacy and an example to the twentieth. This is the gift of England, the nursing-mother of freedom, to the greatest of her dependents.

It may seem a small matter that, thousands of miles away beyond the sea, a policy of repression and of adventure has been adopted by an English Government; but the public opinion that has become inured to such devices will soon be ready to condone a like policy nearer home. What it has pardoned in Asia, that it will not be able to condemn effectively in Europe; what it has applauded in India, that it will soon applaud in England. Is the England of the twentieth century to be a country of sound finance, of steady industry, of peace and liberty? Or is it to be a country whose manufacturers can only avert the crash of ruin by struggling for new markets which are more and more difficult to obtain, a country like its neighbours, so long pitied and despised, spending its money and sacrificing its freedom to the necessities of an ever threatening war? Is it to be a country debauched by the ideals of military glory, and governed by the methods of arbitrary power? These are the questions England will soon have to answer, but the answer will be given, not here, but in India. On our policy in India to-day depends our policy in England in the years to come. We have the choice of peace and war, of liberty and servitude; but we cannot choose one for England and the other for India. Our fates, in this, are linked more nearly than the wildest Imperialist has dared to hope; and if we sacrifice India to our obstinacy, or our pride of race, to our love of glory or of gain, India will be avenged; and in the common ruin that will overtake us both, the true glories of England will perish with the false, and our ancient prosperity, so long the envy of the world, and our ancient freedom, compared with which our Empire is a thing of yesterday, will fall to rise no more.

The Count of Turin is about to start on a tour round the world. His Royal Highness will first visit America and return by way of India.

ENGLAND AND INDIA: A "*LEONINA SOCIETAS*."

III.

THOUGH of less importance than India's contribution to the Imperial exchequer in respect of the services of British troops in India, there are various other matters, where India has to pay, in which the same uniform injustice to India is observable.

CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE EXPENSES OF HER MAJESTY'S SHIPS IN INDIAN SEAS.

The negotiations connected with this matter are somewhat intricate, but the facts are fairly simple. We may start in 1867-69 with a charge to India of £70 per man—making out for six ships with a complement of 1,000 men in the aggregate at £70,000 per annum. About 1885, a departmental committee enquired into the matter. In their final report on the annual subsidy, it was recommended that the number of vessels to be employed continually in Indian waters should be reduced to four; that the subsidy should be £38,500 a year (that is to say, for 550 men at £70 a year); and that a few extras should be paid by the Indian Government. The Admiralty accepted these proposals for 1888-89. But the Treasury was not satisfied. In 1890 they informed the India Office that the cost of the four vessels then in Indian waters was estimated at £76,000 a year, and that they could not continue to accept only £38,500 a year. The India Office very properly replied that it was no part of the original arrangement "that the Admiralty should be relieved at the cost of Indian revenues of any portion of the expense, which they [*i.e.*, the Admiralty] had always borne of maintaining a naval squadron in Indian waters." The claim of the Treasury "would be only reasonable were the squadron placed at the sole disposal of the Government of India," which it is not.

Then follows conflicting claims, but one finds the demand of the Treasury always steadily mounting higher. For 1891-2 for four vessels the Treasury claimed £103,577. The Government of India said that they only wanted three ships, and for these offered to pay £49,600, representing the full cost of those vessels, effective and non-effective charges, with a charge for depreciation. Lord Rosebery, as Prime Minister, was called in to arbitrate upon general principles. Further correspondence ensued, the Admiralty now claiming £117,000 a year. This charge was finally compromised at £117,000 for 1895-6 and £100,000 a year onwards till 1901. Now, £117,000 represents the whole cost of these ships to the uttermost farthing. Is it fair to charge India within £17,000 of that cost, although the ships are by no means at the sole disposal of the Indian Government, while that unfortunate Government is not even allowed to determine the numbers and class of ships it requires for the work it has to pay for? Moreover, when the ships of this Indian squadron are employed in Imperial service there is no payment made by England to India. Here, then, we have the same increasing drain on Indian resources, the same grasping methods on the part of the British Treasury, and the same compulsion upon India to incur for the benefit of Imperial services expenditure unnecessary and excessive for her own local needs.

HER MAJESTY'S ESTABLISHMENTS IN CHINA.

In 1834, when the cost of the establishments of the British Superintendents of Trade in China was accepted as a charge on the Imperial revenues, it was "agreed"—again that ominous word—that one-third should be defrayed by India. Owing to the great increase in the cost of these establishments, India's contribution became £23,000 a year from 1868-72. Of course the Government of India protested, offering £10,000 in 1876. After some haggling the Treasury accepted £15,000, reduced to £12,500 a year in 1890. But why, in the name of common sense, should India contribute to these Chinese establishments? The Treasury does not mulct Canada and Australia in contributions for this Imperial purpose, although they, too, have trade with China. No, the Treasury only attacks the weak and defenceless and avoids irritating the strong.

THE COST OF ADEN.

Aden was originally acquired by the East India Company in 1838 in the interests of shipping passing between India and the Red Sea, as a coaling station, and as a

protection in cases of shipwreck. Since the opening of the Suez Canal has changed the Red Sea from a mere backwater to the main channel of trade between Europe and the East, the importance of Aden has become obviously more Imperial than local. The trade of Aden with the United Kingdom and British Colonies is greater than its trade with India. In one important respect Aden has been of very appreciable value to the United Kingdom, by diminishing the cost of the operations undertaken by Great Britain to suppress the slave trade. Now, Aden costs the Indian Government over a quarter of a million a year (Rx. 280,000) and what does the Imperial Government contribute towards the maintenance of this important Imperial fortress? Merely half the cost of a few special defence walls—in all, a beggarly Rx. 16,000—which again, through the haggling of the War Office, will undoubtedly be considerably less. Why should India pay the whole cost of Aden? Can such an imposition be defended upon any clear principle of financial justice or of Imperial policy?

Mission to the Court of Persia.

In 1835 the East India Company agreed to contribute £12,000 a year to the maintenance of the Persian Mission. In 1858 the Imperial Government agreed to contribute £5,000 a year. And so in this simple but efficacious manner it came about that India contributed 12-17ths and England 5-17ths to the expenses of Great Britain's representative at the Court of Persia. But this is not the whole story. India's £12,000, which was to be a maximum, became a minimum, and it was found out about 1871 that as the average cost of the Mission was only £15,122, and India was still paying £12,000, the canny Imperial Government's contribution had dropped to a modest £3,122. Correspondence ensued, as well it might, and at length the annual charge against India was reduced in 1880 to £10,000, and in 1891 to £7,000, till March 31, 1901. But again, why should India—a local government, with quite enough to look after and to pay for within its own borders—why should India contribute anything to a purely Imperial service such as this?

Examinations for the Indian and Home Civil Service.

Finally, here is a convincing instance of the persistent niggardliness which animates the Home Treasury in dealing with India. The amount in question is small, but that only makes the action of the Treasury the more amazing. The first combined examination for the Indian and Home Civil Service was held in August, 1895, at a cost of £1,860, of which the Treasury bore £250, and India £1,610. [In previous years with separate examinations India had paid, in 1892, £1,481; in 1893, £1,198; in 1894, £1,232]. How were these proportions arrived at? In this fashion. There were in 1895 24 candidates for the Home Service only, 105 for India only, and 49 for both services. At these numbers the charge of £1,860 gives about £10 9s. per head. What, then, does the Treasury do? It pays its proportions for the Home candidates only, *but nothing for the 49 joint candidates*, while the printing charges were borne entirely by the India Office. On this being pointed out the Treasury "agreed" in future, etc., etc. But the incredible meanness of it all! Are these tactics not a disgrace to our methods of Imperial finance? And is it not time that some fair and equitable arrangement were come to between poor India and rich England in all these joint transactions, so that some of the reproach may be taken away from what is at present in its financial aspects a most scandalous instance of a *leonina societas*?

"ASIATIC NEIGHBOURS."

IN the Indian section of the debate on the Address on the opening day of Parliament, Sir William Harcourt drew special attention to Mr. S. S. Thorburn's useful volume, "Asiatic Neighbours," published by Messrs. William Blackwood and Sons (Edinburgh and London), in 1894. We noticed the book at the time, with mixed approval. The reason why we could not extend to it full approval was unconsciously indicated by the author himself.

"Although by 1892," he wrote in his preface, "I had served for sixteen years in trans-Indus and for seven in cis-Indus districts west of Lahore, I had no exact knowledge of the subject, having only read casually a little of its extensive literature. However, like most Panjabi Anglo-Indians, I had my beliefs, though unqualified to hold opinions."

The author had only made a certain advance in shedding his "beliefs" and in establishing "opinions" in their place, and our approval was necessarily limited by the progress of his "self-education in Central Asian affairs." However, our present object is to illustrate certain phases of the frontier business from Mr. Thorburn's independent "opinions." And first, as to

The Meaning of Trans-Frontier Roads.

For nearly half a century now, we have, from fear of hurting the feelings of the Kohat Pass villagers, refrained from insisting on their making the Peshawar-Kohat route practicable for wheeled traffic. The attraction of an increased subsidy and large profits from road-making contracts fails to tempt the Afridi sections concerned to permit a rough track being converted into a high-road, because such conversion would, they say, be *a visible sign of their loss of independence*. . . . We have twice had opportunity for insisting on having a proper road made through the Kohat Pass—once in 1853 . . . and once again in 1877-8. . . . The reason why we have never made a road through the Pass is, that Government in its dealings, as well with its Indian feudatories and subjects as with the most barbarous of the trans-border clans, is always scrupulously faithful to its promises and engagements, and our original agreement with those Kohat Pass clans was that they should give us a right of way only and no more. It is the knowledge of our good faith which gives England the great name she has throughout Central Asia—a fact which will bear fruit in our favour should the Afghans ever be compelled to take sides in a war between Russia and England fought out on some line between our respective existing frontiers.

This shows how false is the position the present Government has got us into, and how essential it is to look at all proposals, however innocent they may seem to us, from the same point of view as the tribesmen. With an Englishman's ideas, what could seem more sensible and useful than a good road? Yet the tribesmen see in it, not the advantages of civilised intercommunication, but "a visible sign of their loss of independence." Now, let us glance at

Some Frontier Clans.

The Kohistanis "are a brave, quiet, non-Afghan people, shepherds and traders by occupation. . . . They have never given us any trouble. Their recent attack on Chilas was a foolish but patriotic stroke for freedom. *We were the aggressors, not they.* Unlike the Kohistanis, the independent Cis-Indus Swatis are poor specimens of manhood," and "can never be other than contemptible." . . . The Black Mountain tribes: "The history of our 'little wars' with such miserable foes is from first to last discreditable to us." . . . The Bonerwals "are the ideal of what Afghan Highlanders should be—simple, austere, religious, and patriotic. *All they desire is to be left alone*; and doubtless their exclusiveness would have been always respected by us but for a wave of fanaticism—*induced partly by the miscalculations of our political officers*—which affected them in 1863."

The Swatis of Swat, "collectively preferring husbandry and trade to strife, having a full knowledge of the justice and comparative lenience in matters of taxation of our Government, and being naturally peaceful, would presumably welcome our annexation of their valley, should such a costly, and probably useless, forward move be ever undertaken." The Utman-Khels "have always been good neighbours to us, except on two occasions—1852 and 1878." If the division of the Mohmands between the Amir and the Government of India be "practically enforced, the Mohmands will probably resent such vivisection." As for our reliance on Umra Khan and Bajour, "on Umra Khan's death, his mushroom kingdom would probably be resolved into its pristine components of a congeries of independent communities."

Turn now to "the savage independence of the Afridis." The six Khyber clans "are collectively the finest and best-armed race of dare-devil Afghans on our border, and are believed to have a united fighting strength of not less than 25,000 men. Neither Moghal Emperor, Sikh Khâlsa, Amir of Afghanistan, or Viceroy of India has ever made any enduring impression upon them. Each clan is supreme within its own narrow limits, sometimes at peace and sometimes at war with a neighbouring clan, but all readily uniting against an external foe. . . . Some 4,000 of their young men are now soldiers in our Native army and in those of our Indian feudatories.

How foolish then, to break, or to attempt to break, the pride of Afridi independence, instead of enlisting it on our side! And how supremely foolish to plant 4,000 seeds of deadly enmity in the breasts of the Native and feudatory armies! Now let us see

The Folly of "Routes and Positions."

It was decided to fortify and garrison several strong positions just inside the Orakzai territory. By so doing, we have permanently locked up in unimportant positions regular troops, who in war-time could be better employed elsewhere. In addition, a large and unnecessary charge is added to the already heavy military expenditure of the Government of India, and *a perpetual grievance is created which will embitter the Orakzais against us for all time.*

Mr. Thorburn is doubtful whether the possession of the

Kuram valley will be "a gain or a white elephant." Now how about

The Tribesmen's Rifles.

Our hill neighbours are *no fanatics*, but shrewd men of action. . . . Since the introduction of the breechloader, their appreciation of its excellence has been continually on the increase. Professional rifle-thieves from the hills now infest our cantonments and camps of exercise, hang about regiments on the march, and freely risk their lives to steal the coveted weapon. So successful are those rifle-thieves that the troops themselves are now made responsible for the loss of their arms. The soldiers try many devices to defeat the thieves—bury their rifles in their tents, sleep with them, chain and padlock them together—but still the rifles disappear singly and in batches. When a breechloader is successfully conveyed across the border, it can be sold for four or five times its market value in British territory.

The Amír, of course, was blamed some eight months ago, and we protested strongly against the aspersion in the absence of adequate evidence. Now what has happened? Why, there has been issued a special report by the authorities of the Government arsenal at Rawal Pindi upon the arms captured in the Malakand and Mohmand expeditions; and that report states that, with the exception of only thirteen weapons, all the rifles were either stolen from our regiments in India or were reconstructed locally from component parts of Indian Government rifles supposed to have been destroyed in accordance with standing regulations. Here is a fine state of discipline and surveillance. But it is always easier to blame somebody else. Seriously, what further steps are to be taken on this amazing revelation of heedlessness and incompetence? Let us, however, now turn to the causes of frontier difficulties with the tribesmen. There are causes on both sides, and they deserve equal attention. First, there is

The Tribal Cause.

Just as in the interior of the province to this day the number of offences against property, notably burglaries, robberies, and thefts, including cattle-lifting—a specialty in pastoral tracts—fluctuates with the price of food staples, increasing when grain is dear and decreasing after a plentiful harvest, so it was with the trans-border tribes. *The coercion of want* rather than innate devilry impelled them to prey on the lowlands. As soon as their leaders were subsidised, or, euphemistically speaking, given service under Government, and their neediest ruffians employed in the Border Militia, *the tribe collectively began to prefer a civilised life, including well-paid, honest labour*. . . Since 1880, progress has been real and continuous. Poor, treacherous, barbarous though the tribesmen are, they are all very shrewd and greedy for gain. They know now that the days of successful brigandage, formerly the most popular means of a precarious livelihood, are now over. . . . In short, they recognise that the old order is changing and giving place to a new, that *nolens volens* they must adapt their habits to those of honest men—or starve. Being in the mass sensible fellows, their choice will be to live and work. Their poverty and individual irresponsibility—the latter now no longer a consequence of their circumstances—were the true causes of their having been little better than hungry wild beasts in the past.

More than that, even in the turbulent past, Mr. Thorburn brings out clearly the fact that, on misconduct of the tribesmen, it "depended more on accident than design" whether the tribe collectively went on the warpath or endeavoured to earn pardon by good behaviour. And what was the nature of the determining "accident"? Why, this: the District Officer's judgment, or lack of judgment, in choosing the time and the manner of enforcing a "blockade." It thus appears that all difficulty would disappear if our own officers had but a modicum of patience and common sense. This brings us to

The Official Cause.

An active frontier policy such as that pursued from 1883 to 1893 [and on to 1898] is of course popular with Anglo-Indians, civilians as well as soldiers, and with the English press of India, the large majority of whose readers are English officials. As Sir Henry Norman, who might have been our Viceroy, wrote in 1867, so always, *such a policy serves "personal objects,"* and is applauded "*from Brevet or K.C.B.-mania*, rather than Russophobia." The forward creed of the large majority of Anglo-Indians is doubtless as much due to hopes of distinction as to the innate fighting propensities of all healthy Englishmen in the prime of life—for few are otherwise in India. Whether right or wrong their belief has certainly small foundation from any close and independent study of the Indo-Russian problem.

Yet our titular officials, whether deliberately or under pressure, allow these politically ignorant and heedless subordinates, led by the "high military mandarins," to plunge both India and England not only into appalling expenditure of blood and treasure, but into dishonourable acts of State, dangerous alike to the Dependency and to the Empire. Surely it is high time that the English electorate should require that India be governed not for the "personal objects" of military aspirants, but for the national interests of India and the Imperial interests of England.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

PAYMENT IN KIND.

To the Editor of India.

Sir,—Admitting for the sake of argument that the system of taking rent in India from zemindars and sub-tenants in kind in place of in cash, advocated by the *Friend of India* in the article quoted at page 194 of the issue of India of the 1st instant, is, theoretically, the fairest method, because the State and its tenants equally lose or benefit by the vicissitudes of the seasons, I do not think anyone who has had the practical experience, as I have had, of administering a country in which the former method of levy was prevalent could possibly recommend it. In the first place, as the rayat could not be trusted to state accurately what the out-turn of his crops had been, and it would be equally impossible (as well as inadvisable) to employ the hosts of watchers necessary to watch the crops from their reaping or otherwise harvesting till the actual division between the landlord and tenant took place, to prevent their being tampered with, a resort must be had to an estimate of the crops as they stand in the field by State officials, such as the Patels and Desais in Gujarat formerly were. The risk of under-estimation or over-estimation of produce, especially the former, is far too great—even if the appraisers are honest and act up to their lights in carrying out the duty—to be lightly undertaken. That the custom of the country appreciated this difficulty is proved by the fact that the estimation of dry-crop wheat (Chásia Ghánu) in some parts was carried out in the following manner. The number of rows of the crop was counted in each field. Three rows were selected, which were supposed to represent the best, the middling and the inferior qualities, and the corn in these three rows was then rubbed out with the hand and weighed. This multiplied by the total number of rows in each field and divided by three, gave the estimated produce of each field. I need not go into the story of how the produce of the three rows, which was supposed to belong to Government, was disposed of, although the account is very entertaining. As this process had to be gone through in hundreds of fields in numerous villages, and men sufficiently trustworthy to be allowed to superintend such operations were not always to be found, the delays that took place were often vexatious, and during these the crops were liable to injury from wild animals, from vicissitudes of the weather, and so on. The amount of produce of each field being estimated, either in this way or by eye estimate, a still more unsatisfactory method, the produce must either be actually divided, or its value calculated in money. The former is practically impossible, for the State could not erect a sufficient number of barns or storehouses to keep it in the hundreds of villages and over large tracts of country. The matter thus resolved itself into getting contractors to bid for the purchase of the produce, with what evil results both to the State and to its tenants may easily be imagined.

The only other alternative is, of course, to fix cash rents on the land, and the prosperity of the country depends on the moderation with which those rents are fixed. They must not be rack-rents, or the tenants will have no inducement to endeavour to improve their own condition. They should be so low as to leave a margin for sub-letting, in order that the right of occupancy may have a saleable value, and be capable of being paid with ease in all ordinary seasons. Volumes could be written on the subject, and I have endeavoured to show in your columns before now that the system in some parts of British India does not come up to this ideal; but my present purpose is simply to show that as far as concerns the two, cash payments or payments in kind, the latter is out of the question.—Yours faithfully, A. Rogers,

Late Bombay C. S.

CHRONICLE OF THE WEEK.

Wednesday, April 6.—President M'Kinley, instead of sending his Message to Congress to-day, postponed it. The President's reasons for the postponement were not known, though various guesses were made. The war party had been roused to further declarations against delay. Nothing more was heard of the Pope's mediation, though it was reported in Madrid that he had asked for an armistice in Cuba. The Vienna correspondent of the *Times* sent details of a scheme which had come to his knowledge, proposing to settle the Cuban difficulty by placing the island in the same relation to Spain as Egypt is in to Turkey, the United States being thus enabled to play in Cuba the part which the English played in Egypt.

Public opinion in Japan, while it was friendly towards England, raised no general objection to the cession of Wei-hai-wei, was anxious that the Japanese should assert themselves in some way, and that the Government should no longer remain inactive. The Opposition was agitating against Russia and Germany. The *Journals des Débats* suggested that Wei-hai-wei was asked for merely in order to calm the irritation of

the British public, and that we had gained in it only a compromising position without the possibility of any great advantage. The *Débats* also protested against the employment of British naval officers to reorganise the Chinese navy unless officers of other nationalities were also employed.

The official despatch about the fighting in the Soudan on Tuesday estimated the Dervish losses at about 200, and dwelt especially upon the "useful work" done by the Maxim guns.

THURSDAY, April 7.—The Spanish Government deliberated for several hours on Wednesday night respecting a Message in which the Pope desired to know what concessions could be made to the United States. Early this morning the Cabinet decided to reply that the Government simply reaffirmed its previous decisions, which were already known to President M'Kinley. An official Note announcing the decision of the Ministers was afterwards issued, and caused great excitement in Madrid. At Washington to-day, the Representatives of the Powers presented to Mr. M'Kinley a Note appealing to the feelings of humanity and moderation of the American people to maintain peace. President M'Kinley replied that the United States appreciated the motives of the Powers, and he was confident that equal appreciation would be shown for their own earnest, unselfish endeavours to end a situation in Cuba the indefinite prolongation of which had become insufferable.

A Conference of Delegates of the miners in South Wales and Monmouthshire was held at Cardiff. After a stormy discussion it was resolved by a large majority to demand a ten per cent. advance in wages, and, in the event of this being conceded by the employers, the men undertook to resume work. Dissatisfaction was expressed with the action of the men's representatives on the sliding scale committee, and five new members were chosen.

FRIDAY, April 8.—A "brilliant victory" was won by Sir Herbert Kitchener's force in the Soudan, which attacked the enemy's entrenched position early this morning. The Dervishes lost heavily, their leader, Mahmud, was taken prisoner; and they were in full flight pursued by cavalry and Maxim guns. The losses so far known on the British side included two officers of the British brigade killed and ten wounded. Of the British officers with the Egyptian army four were wounded. It was stated that the Dervishes behaved very bravely, and that they suffered badly during the bombardment of their camp before the charge which carried the intrenchments was made. The feature of the battle was said to be the extraordinary steadiness of the Sirdar's troops throughout the engagement.

The President of the United States still intended to lay his Message before Congress on Saturday unless any unforeseen development of events should cause it to be again delayed. In Madrid a slightly more hopeful tone prevailed to-day, but there was no corresponding change in Washington, and war preparations were being pushed forward incessantly on each side. A strong Spanish squadron had been ordered to Cape Verd.

China's voluntary opening of new treaty ports, to which Wu-sung was the latest addition, was intended, the Pekin correspondent of the *Times* said, to induce England to agree to a revision of the commercial tariff.

The Russian Embassy in Constantinople had again demanded from the Porte Prince George's appointment as Governor of Crete; and the King of Greece was reported to have stated in public that the matter was practically settled.

The Queen had a long interview to-day with the Marquis of Salisbury. President Faure, who left Paris for the Riviera today, was to wait upon her Majesty on Monday.

Mr. Hamar Bass, M.P., died in his fifty-sixth year from complications following acute rheumatism. Mr. Bass, who was a Liberal Unionist, had sat for West Staffordshire since 1885, and at the last election was returned unopposed.

SATURDAY, April 10.—The Spanish Government issued a decree granting an armistice to the Cuban rebels. The general tone of the American Press was in favour of insisting on independence for Cuba. General Lee, the American Consul-General in Havana, left that city on Saturday, placing the Consulate in charge of the British Consul-General.

The Sirdar of the Egyptian army telegraphed from Atbara the list of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the British brigade who were killed in Friday's action or subsequently died of their wounds. The officers killed were Captains Findlay and Urquhart, of the Cameron Highlanders, and Second Lieutenant Gore, of the Seaforths. There were 21 non-commissioned officers and men killed. The total estimated loss of the Dervishes in the battle and pursuit was not less than 3,000. Two thousand of their dead were counted in the open. The victors took ten guns, a large number of rifles, over 100 banners, and quantities of other spoils. The German Emperor, on receiving the news of the victory, telegraphed his congratulations to the British Ambassador in Berlin, and requested that they might also be offered to Lord Salisbury and the Sirdar.

The Committee of the South Wales Coal Owners' Association considered a letter from the workmen's secretary, setting forth their demands, and asking for a conference between the committee and the men's representatives. The committee fixed a meeting for Tuesday. They also decided to keep the collieries open to all who would accept terms which would be posted at the collieries on Monday. Certain non-associated colliery owners conceded their men an advance of 10 per cent.

MONDAY, April 11.—President M'Kinley sent to Congress his message on Cuban affairs. He stated that a once prosperous community had been reduced to comparative want, and its people had been perishing by tens of thousands from hunger and destitution. American trade had suffered, the capital of their citizens had been largely lost, and the temper and forbearance of their people had been severely tried. The elements of danger and disorder were strikingly illustrated by the destruction of the battle-ship "Maine" in the harbour of Havana. A long trial had proved that the objects for which Spain had waged war could not be attained, and the only hope for relief was in the enforced pacification of Cuba. In view of these facts, he asked Congress for authority to take measures to secure the full and final determination of hostilities and to secure in the Island the establishment of a stable Government capable of maintaining order. The President also recommended that the distribution of food supplies should be continued.

The St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Times* said that the Russian Press, in response to an official intimation, had now ceased its onslaughts on Great Britain in connexion with the acquisition of Wei-hai-wei. A Reuter despatch from Pekin said it was stated that an agreement had been arrived at between China and Japan in regard to the desire of the latter to possess a port.

The Independent Labour Party opened their annual conference at Birmingham. The balance-sheet showed a deficit of £252 in the funds. Mr. Keir Hardie, who presided, condemned the existing system of Parliamentary government, observing that in 1832 the people, without a vote, could make king and peer tremble, while now the workers, with the vote, were as Lazarus at the rich man's table. He urged the organisation of means by which to get a group of Independent Labour representatives into the House of Commons. The delegates passed a resolution referring the question of the abolition of the Independent Labour Party and fusion with the Social Democratic Federation to the branches.

TUESDAY, April 12.—The Foreign Affairs Committees of the Senate and House of Representatives in Washington were considering resolutions in reply to the President's Message, but did not arrive at any conclusion. It was understood that a majority of the Senate Committee were in favour of a mandatory resolution, but there was some uncertainty as to the attitude of the House Committee. In the meantime, some speeches of a bellicose tendency were delivered in the Senate. According to the Washington correspondent of the *New York Herald*, the text of the Spanish armistice decree was disappointing to the President.—In Madrid order was maintained, and attempts made on Monday night to renew the disorders of the previous evening were firmly repressed.

Mr. Gladstone's illness took an unfavourable turn on Monday evening, and he passed a restless night, but was better this afternoon.

Mr. Dillon addressed a meeting of the natives of Co. Armagh resident in Glasgow, and, referring to the Irish Local Government Bill, he said that, in so far as it trusted the people of Ireland, it was a good measure, though it had many shortcomings and faults. But he was not one to go down on his knees in thanks for this belated Bill, for which Ireland would have to pay to the Irish landlords a ransom of four hundred thousand a year. He accepted it as a long step towards the national liberty of the Irish, convinced that nothing which the British Government could give, short of the right to govern themselves, would disarm the spirit of Irish nationality.

The meeting between the employers' committee and the men's representatives at Cardiff was very brief, as the men's delegates had no plenary powers, and the employers declined to discuss with them terms for which they could not guarantee acceptance by the men.

The St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Times* said that the construction of the Siberian railway was to be pushed on as fast as possible. An order had been given to an American firm for 32,000 tons of rails. The locomotives for the Manchurian section of the railway had also been ordered in America.

WEDNESDAY, April 13.—The Foreign Relations Committees of both Houses of Congress brought up resolutions instructing the President to demand that Spain should at once relinquish its authority and government in the island of Cuba and withdraw its land and naval forces. The Committees further resolved that the President be directed and empowered to use the entire land and naval forces of the United States, and to call up such militia as might be necessary. The House of Representatives adopted the resolution by 322 votes to 19, and the Senate was equally warlike, although it had not yet arrived at a decision. An American flying squadron was despatched with sealed orders, but it was officially stated that the object was only a trial cruise.

In Madrid the situation was on all sides regarded as serious, notwithstanding a report that Cardinal Rampolla had addressed a telegram to the Government, assuring it that peace would not be disturbed. After a Council of Ministers, held on Tuesday night, a Note was issued, stating that after hearing the substance of President M'Kinley's Message, Ministers declared that the doctrines expounded in it were inconsistent with the sovereignty and rights of the Spanish nation in Cuba, and constituted an interference with the affairs of Spain. Ministers, however, did not feel called upon to take any action, so long as the American Congress did not resort to coercive acts. They resolved, nevertheless, to place all the forces of the country in a complete state of preparation.

Last night's bulletin at Hawarden Castle was as follows:—"Mr. Gladstone had a good night, and is pretty well to-day."

It was announced that the Chinese Government had agreed to lease to France a bay on the southern coast, and to grant a concession for the construction of a railway connecting Tonkin with Yunnan-Fu, by way of the Red River. They had also declared the inalienability of the provinces bordering on Tonkin, and had entered into an arrangement with regard to the organisation of the Postal Service. By previous arrangements China had undertaken not to cede the Island of Hainan to any other Power.

Advanced copies of the report of the British South Africa Company were issued. An increase of capital by £1,500,000 was proposed, and Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Beit, and Mr. Rochfort Maguire were nominated by shareholders to join the directorate.

Mr. Courtney, speaking at Tywardreath, said the true policy in China was to obtain an agreement that her ports should be open on equal terms to all nations. If the ills of Cuba could be cured by Spanish dominion, annexation by the United States would be unjustifiable.

Sir E. Grey, at Hartlepool, said the policy of the Government in China was indefensible. They should have made up their minds long ago whether they intended to resist Russia's taking Port Arthur, and if they had decided to do so they should have given Russia timely warning. That would have been an intelligible policy.

The general position with regard to the strike in the Welsh coal trade remained unchanged. A number of the non-associated collieries had given an advance of ten per cent. Mass meetings of the men were held to-day and a strong feeling against the granting of plenary powers was manifested. To-morrow the men's delegates were to meet at Cardiff to consider the position.

INDIA IN THE BRITISH PRESS.

The New Law of Sedition.

The *Manchester Guardian* of April 7 contained the following article "from a correspondent":—

The important debate in the Indian Legislative Council on the occasion of the passing of the new substantive sedition law has passed almost unnoticed by the English Press. The official "Gazette of India" gives, as usual, a full report of the proceedings in Council; but very few people in England ever see the "Gazette of India," and the debate was so long that ordinary Indian newspapers have apparently found it impossible to report the proceedings. These resulted, after a nine-hours' sitting, in the proposals of the Government becoming law, with only one amendment; but the cause of the Native Press was fought with great ability by a minority of Native members, including one Mahometan gentleman and one wealthy Hindu nobleman—representatives, that is, of classes not generally supposed to favour liberty of the Press. The first great point at issue between the two parties in the Council was as to the wisdom of legislating at all on this subject at the present juncture, and some of the members who supported the Government by their votes indicated in their speeches that they did not think the proposed legislation urgent or expedient. For the Government it was contended that the most important of the proposed enactments was merely a better explanation of what had already been judicially declared to be the law; but it was argued with great force on the other side that on this view of the effect of the new section there was manifestly no urgent necessity for the legislation. The results of the recent Press trials had shown that the Government already possessed ample power to deal with any seditious utterances, and that but little advantage could be gained from the drawing up of a new formula restating the old law. And, on the other hand, it was shown that the effect of this action of the Government would be to widen the breach between it and the educated, progressive classes, and to induce in them the belief that the Government had not merely acted with seeming hardness reluctantly and of necessity, but was bent on pursuing a policy of reaction, careless of the wounded feelings of an important class of its subjects.

The next main issue between the Government and the minority was as to the form of the new section brought forward to take the place of that under which certain Indian editors were recently convicted. The amended section, as it now stands in the Statute-book, makes it an offence to attempt to bring into hatred or contempt or to excite disaffection towards her Majesty or the Government established by law in British India. On behalf of the minority it was urged that the part of the section referring to hatred and contempt would make effective criticism of the Government impossible, as all hostile criticism necessarily excited a certain amount of contempt; and it was asked that the term disaffection should be defined. The Government section does not define this term; an explanation appended to the section states that disaffection "includes" disloyalty and all feelings of enmity; but an amendment to substitute the word "means" for "includes" was rejected. Another still more important amendment which was rejected proposed to define disaffection as meaning all feelings incompatible with a disposition to render obedience to the lawful authority of the Government established by law in British India, and to support the lawful authority against unlawful attempts to subvert or resist that authority. The acceptance of this amendment would have brought back the law to what, before the result of the recent Press trials, it was very generally supposed to be. Great stress was laid on the fact that Sir Fitzjames Stephen, then the legislative member of the Council, said, when introducing the section now superseded, "Let it be shown that the matter complained of was not consistent with a disposition to obey the law; let it be shown that it was consistent only with a disposition to resist the law by force, and it did fall under this section; otherwise not." On the part of the majority it was contended that, whatever Sir Fitzjames Stephen said, the section which he helped to enact had a wider effect, as declared by recent judicial decisions, and that the effect of the acceptance of the amendment would be to legalise utterances recommending, indeed, a sort of provisional loyalty and obedience to the law, but in fact undermining the foundations of British rule by nourishing in the masses feelings of dislike to that rule. Are we prepared, it was said, to have the people imbued with such feelings that they will thank God for their deliverance from the British dominion? "Oderint dum metuant," said one member, is not a safe maxim in India; if the people hate the Government, they may acquiesce in its rule now, but they will not stand by it in danger. Sir A. Mackenzie, the Lieutenant-Governor in Bengal, hardly seems to have concurred in this view, for, with questionable taste, he quoted Lord Macaulay's lines:—

Once the jay sent a message
Unto the eagle's nest:
"Now yield thee up thy eyrie
Unto the carrion kite,
Or come forth valiantly and face
The jays in deadly fight."
Forth looked in wrath the eagle,
And carrion kite and jay,
Soon as they saw his beak and claw,
Fled screaming far away.

The Government speakers over and over again declared that they had no desire to suppress criticism; and explanations are appended to the section to the effect that comments expressing disapprobation of the measures of the Government with a view to obtain their alteration by lawful means, or of the administrative or other action of the Government, without exciting or attempting to excite hatred, contempt, or disaffection, are lawful. But, urged a Native member of Council, different men have different ways of expressing themselves; public writers have a duty to fulfil no less to the Government than to the people—the duty, in the language of Mr. Justice Best, of setting the Government in motion for the people, and not setting the people in motion against the Government; and it is unwise for the Government to enact a law which may tend to demoralise or emasculate the performance of a useful public function.

Another amendment rejected by the majority would have assimilated Indian to English law by providing that all imprisonment imposed as a punishment under this section should be simple and not rigorous. As the section is drawn the punishment which may be inflicted is very severe—transportation for life, to which fine may be added, or imprisonment either rigorous or simple for three years, to which fine may be added, or fine only. Another section which was enacted at the same session, and which may sometimes operate harshly, makes it punishable to circulate reports which are likely to produce certain injurious effects, including the incitement of any class to commit any offence against any other class, unless the accused is able to prove affirmatively not only that he had reasonable grounds for believing the truth of the report, but also that he published it without any intent of producing such injurious effects. If evil intent can be established affirmatively against him, the truth of the report is no defence; but when no evil intent is established against him it will still be hardly possible for him to avail himself of the exception to the section, for actual proof of the absence of an evil intention will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to produce. So that an editor who has published in all good faith a true piece of news which is capable of being held likely to cause the commission of certain offences against public tranquillity may find himself liable to two years' imprisonment.

"THE INDIAN FRONTIER AND THE FAR EAST."

Under the heading "Indian Affairs," the following article appeared in the *Times* of April 12:—

The events of the past month alter the political centre of gravity in Asia. During twenty years the frontier defences and the military expenditure of India have been dominated by the idea that the Caspian and the Oxus formed the inevitable line of Russia's advance. Successive Viceroys at Simla and successive Ministries at Whitehall have acted on this conviction. Wars have been waged, treaties made, and enormous expenses on frontier fortifications and railways incurred, with a view to the probable meeting of the two European Powers in Afghanistan. Diverse opinions, widening into sharply opposed schools, have been entertained as to the strategic methods for averting the danger. But, in the judgment of responsible British statesmen since 1876, the contingency had, by some method or another, to be prepared for. Whatever the strategic line adopted, whether on the Indian base of the mountains or along their ridge, or on the Afghan side beyond, the safeguarding of the frontier against a Russian advance has been the continuous problem of Indian strategy in our time. By one mighty move Russia suddenly discloses another line of advance on the Asiatic chess-board.

We propose to examine the bearings of that move on the frontier policy of India. Recent transactions indicate that, in the event of a conflict with Russia in the East, the primary point of impact will now be not in Afghanistan, but in the Chinese seas. Yet, because Russia has thus in a sense turned the flank of the Central Asian question, we do not forget that the former probable point of attack remains. Although Russian and British interests are brought face to face in the Gulf of Pe-chi-li, the valley of the Oxus continues in Russian hands. But the valley of the Oxus has ceased to be Russia's main line of advance, and her prestige in Asia will for some time depend not so much upon what she attempts in Central Asia as on what she accomplishes in Manchuria and on the Chinese coast. Russia has, in fact, stepped forward from her safe position as the first land Power in Central Asia to the less assured position of a naval Power in the Far East, with a double choice of attack on British interests, but also with a new necessity of defence. It by no means follows that there will be any immediate occasion either for defence or attack. If the European nations are wise, they will consolidate what they have won from China before quarrelling over the spoils. But wisdom cannot with too much confidence be expected either from men or from nations. We have at present to deal with three facts. First, that until last month Russia was invulnerable to Great Britain in Asia; she was from her geographical position an attacking Power, Great Britain a Power perpetually on the defence. Second, that the cost of this perpetual defence had to be defrayed not by Great Britain, but by India. Third, that the rivalry of England and Russia in Asia now stands clearly revealed, not as a question of Indian, but of Imperial interest; as a burden not to be borne alone by the Indian taxpayer, but by the united sea and land forces of the British empire. If Russia allows time to do its work she has before her a dominion such as the world never imagined; a dominion stretching from the Baltic to the Pacific, and from the Arctic Ocean to the Black Sea and the Pamirs. A month ago Russia's relations to England in Asia were represented by strategic positions between the Indus and the Oxus; to-day they are represented by strategic positions in the Chinese seas.

We do not infer, with the wisdom which comes after the event, that the Indian frontier defences and the Indian military expenditure of the past twenty years were therefore based on an erroneous view of the situation. Governments have to act on existing facts and existing probabilities, and the facts and probabilities pointed to the Oxus as Russia's main line of Asiatic advance in a way that seemed conclusive to statesmen widely opposed on almost all other questions of Indian polity. Whether it was Lord Lytton coercing Afghanistan to the British interests by war, or whether it was Lord Ripon securing the alliance of the Amir by engagements of reciprocal defence, each Viceroy has in his own way done his best to build up and maintain Afghanistan as a buffer State between Russia and England. The burden has been a grievous one to India; it has been borne with difficulty, and has given rise to bitter complaints. Whether it should have been borne by India alone is a serious question, but that it was a burden justified by the facts and probabilities of the last quarter of a century remains evident. Nor is it by any means certain that the expenditure which the North-Western frontier defences involved has not borne fruit. A skilfully directed Power like Russia usually, though not always, advances by the least line of resistance. The absolute resolve of the British Government that there shall be no thoroughfare towards India by way of Afghanistan may have formed an important factor in Russia's expansion towards Manchuria and the Yellow Sea. The object of Indian frontier strategy and of Indian frontier expenditure has been to make an advance to the south-east of the Oxus seem undesirable to Russia. It is possible that Russia has come to the conclusion that it is undesirable. It is certain that she has thrown herself forward across Asia by a more northern line, which, with a magnificent promise in the future, creates new demands on her resources, financial and political, for many years to come.

The debate of March 7 in the House of Lords will perhaps be found to mark the consummation of a distinct period in the history of British Indian policy. The parties to that debate were men who spoke with the authority derived from the supreme command, civil and military, in India, and from the Parliamentary control of Indian affairs, as Secretaries of State, at home. They all proceeded on the assumption that the advance of Russia by way of the Oxus was a contingency against which the Indian Government was bound to the utmost of its means to provide. One of the greatest soldiers of our times set forth what he believed to be the most effectual military barrier, the Kandahar-Ghazni-Kabul line. Lord Roberts had been forced to this conclusion by the war experience of 18 years, from a different view, which, as Lord Northbrook showed, was entertained by Sir Frederick Roberts in 1880. His conclusion gained, rather than lost, in cogency by the fact that it had thus resulted from no *a priori* argument, but from the long and stern teaching of facts. There was no serious attempt to answer Lord Roberts on purely military grounds; yet the mere statement of his proposals led to their being at once recognised by the House of Lords and by the nation as lying outside the scope of practical politics at the moment. He himself declined to discuss their financial aspects, for if he had done so he would probably have been the first to acknowledge that they entailed expenditure which was beyond the unaided resources of India, and to which Great Britain was little likely at present to contribute. What he did was to place on solemn record his views as to the best military method for dealing with the apparently permanent problem of Indian defence against Russia.

How permanent the problem seemed only a month ago, appears from the weighty speech in which Lord Northbrook opposed so advanced a line. After a luminous review of the policy in the past, he asked that the policy of the future should now be decided on, but decided on not alone from the soldier's but also from the statesman's standpoint. The considerations which should guide such a decision, he urged, were the number of troops available for the purpose in India, the probable effect of the proposed measures on the Indian Army, and above all "the financial power of India to defray the expenditure which would be involved." Lord Northbrook was as firmly convinced as Lord Roberts that the safe-guarding of the North-West frontier against Russian intrigues and Russian aggression remained an imperative duty of the British Government in India. But a too forward policy is felt to involve an undue strain upon India. Apart from estimates made by opponents of that policy, which place its cost as high as 71½ million rupees since 1878, there can be no question that the burden has been a heavy one, and that it furnishes a popular grievance in India. The successful conclusion of the tribal war on the North-West frontier gives an opportunity for reconsidering that policy without risk to our prestige among our immediate neighbours. At the same time the new course which Russian expansion has taken in Northern Asia, and the new responsibilities which she is assuming in the Far East, divert a part of the pressure heretofore concentrated along the line of the Oxus—the pressure which our frontier policy was mainly designed to ward off.

Commenting on the article printed above, the *Manchester Guardian* (April 13) said:—

The able writer in the *Times* on Indian affairs urges a reconsideration of our frontier policy in view of Russia's late acquisitions in the Far East. There is more than one way of political salvation, and one need not quarrel with a conversion on Indian frontier policy because it has been gained in China. What, it may be asked, has Port Arthur to do with Peshawar? How has the Russian acquisition of a naval base in the Gulf of Pe-chi-li increased the security of the Indian frontier? India gains, of course, by a transference of Russian activity from the Oxus to China, but there is a further reason why she may regard the Russian possession of Port Arthur with a purely selfish satisfaction. It has made Russia in Asia vulnerable for the first time in history. A month ago she could not be attacked, but could choose her own point of attack. Now she can be attacked in the event of war, and we could choose our point of attack. India would be the gainer, for if there was to be war we should naturally prefer an offensive war at Port Arthur to a defensive war on the Indian frontier. India has gained in yet another way. Previously she has had to bear the whole burden of our suspicion of Russia. We have all along contended that the defence of the Indian frontier, at any rate in the later stages of its history, was an Imperial question, and not one that concerned India solely. But if there was ever any doubt on this matter, there is, as the writer in the *Times* frankly admits, no room for any now. India will no longer bear the burden alone. What then, shall we say, should be the nature of the reconsideration of Indian frontier policy that is now urged? The alternative frontier policies from the purely military point of view are the Indus frontier, with control of the Indian end of the passes, and the Kabul-Ghazni-Kandahar frontier advocated by Lord Roberts and others. This second

frontier was never more than a military ideal avowedly based on suspicion of Russian designs on India, and those designs, if ever they existed, are now put off for an indefinite period. Not one of the recent advances on the frontier is defensible in itself on military grounds, but only as a means to an end, namely the frontier at Kabul and Kandahar. That has always been an impracticable dream, and the danger which caused men to dream of it is now seen more clearly than ever to be illusory.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

CRITICISM IN INDIA.

"The Gilt on the Gingerbread."—*The Pioneer.*

For the year upon which we are now entering Sir James Westland's figures are at first sight very favourable. The full amount of the Famine Insurance Grant (Rx, 1,500,000) is to be restored; a sum of Rx. 1,490,000 is provided for "continued military expenditure," and a further sum of Rx. 200,000 to meet the additional payments necessitated by the improvement in the pay of the British soldier in India; and withal we emerge with a surplus of Rx. 890,000. Here also, however, we have to take the figures with a good many qualifications. In the first place, the estimates assume that the current year is to be a bumper. For instance, if we take the last decade, the annual increment of the land revenue has been thirty-one lakhs, but the estimate for the current year is Rx. 850,000 in excess of this. The estimate, of course, includes the recovery of revenue suspended last year, and we do not say the figure is put too high on a fair calculation of probabilities; but the fact remains that we are building on the assumption that in the coming twelve months everything will turn out as extraordinarily well in the agricultural world as last year it turned out badly. But allowing that all the estimates will be realised, the surplus is arrived at only by renewing the six millions sterling of outstanding temporary debt, by adding £2,615,300 to the permanent sterling debt (the new sterling loan is to be six millions, but of this £3,380,000 goes in paying off debenture stock), by issuing a new three crore rupee loan, and finally by assuming that we shall be able to remit sixteen million sterling in Council bills at the rate of 15⅝d. to the rupee. All this is calculated to dim the gilt on the gingerbread. . . . . We are glad to see that some glimmering perception of the fatuity of driving full-speed ahead in the matter of railway construction with financial shoals in full view is at last dawning upon the advisers of Government.

Beware of Heavy Railway Extension.—*Bombay Gazette.*

Sir James Westland described this record as a better one than can be shown by almost any country in the world but the United Kingdom. But he left out of consideration the serious qualification of this statement, that the result of which he spoke has only been obtained by very considerable increases in taxation; and by the enormous additions to the debt of the country of 198 crores, which, according to Sir James Westland's own showing, only yield at present a return of one-half per cent. per annum. As a matter of fact, the increase of our liabilities has been much greater than the amount stated, for the average of sixteen pence per rupee upon which the estimate is based has certainly not been reached in the sterling loans spread over this period. Only three rupee loans raised during the two decades have been allotted at an average rate above par; the ten other loans raised in India aggregating to over 27 crores have all been floated at a discount. . . . . The principal criticism arising from the Budget statement, so far as it relates to the question of State indebtedness, is that as our liabilities are so heavy it is grievous error to increase them in order to carry out a heavy railway extension programme until normal conditions prevail. In ordinary circumstances the investment of capital in the development of the railway systems of the country is to be highly approved, but in the years of heavy deficit through which we have been passing and the twelve months of recovery upon which, as we hope, we are entering, additions should not be made to capital liabilities unless such a step is absolutely necessary. A postponement until normal conditions prevail of the extension "programme" would interfere with the known desire of the Viceroy that his quinquennium should be marked by unprecedented railway construction, but this fact ought not to lead to a departure from sound financial principles.

"The Danger of Help from England."—*The Englishman.*

Many men are too much inclined to call upon England to help us with pecuniary aid in our difficulties, or at least to accept without hesitation aid that may be proferred. Sir James Westland tells us in this review that we do not need assistance from external sources, that we can live our own life and pay our own charges, and that it will be all the better for us if we continue to do so and to maintain our financial independence. It is not the least of the Finance Minister's public services that he should publicly draw attention to the danger on which Sir John Strachey spoke emphatically in 1880, of taking financial help from England. The words of Sir John Strachey should always be borne in mind, and they are peculiarly apposite at the present moment when financial help was being pressed upon us by the Government in England, although we have, as Sir James Westland puts it, every prospect of wiping out in a single year the financial effects of the afflictions and calamities which have smitten the country. If this is to be Sir James Westland's last budget he has done well to sound again the useful note of warning put out by his predecessor. But we trust that he will be given, and will accept, the opportunity of telling us in another budget next year that he has crowned his financial work in India by the successful determination of his task as a currency reformer, and by beginning the task, now urgently required, of fiscal reformer. Without being unduly optimistic, a budget such as is presented to us after the period through which we have passed, gives good ground for the hope that we are about to enter upon a time of peace, prosperity, and financial security.

"Obviously Incomplete and Misleading."—*The Pioneer.*

The object of the Finance Member in entering upon this review [of twenty years of Indian finance] was to show how absurd it is to suppose that India needs financial assistance from England. Now we have several times expressed the opinion that a system of subvention by the Imperial Parliament is objectionable on many grounds, and we see that Sir James Westland quotes again the passage we cited some time ago in this connexion from Sir John Strachey's speech in Council in 1880; but as it stands this survey of twenty years' finance is obviously incomplete and misleading. We have paid our way, it is true, but surely the Finance Member ought to have reminded us that in doing so we have enormously increased taxation. Knock off the proceeds of new or enhanced taxation within the last fifteen years, and where would be the balance of which Sir James Westland is so proud? And why are we not reminded that the Imperial Parliament did actually contribute 5,000,000 towards the Afghan war, though Sir John Strachey at first was indignant at the idea? That India can afford a special war expenditure at the rate at which it has been going on during the last twenty years is, we believe, one of the most unwarrantable and dangerous conclusions to which a Finance Minister could come.

Sir J. Westland's Silence.—*The Friend of India.*

Sir James Westland's review of the finance of the past twenty years, however interesting it may otherwise be, is very far from fulfilling the purpose it was intended to serve—that of showing that the Government of India is justified in not accepting financial assistance from Her Majesty's Government at the present juncture. So far, indeed, is it from pointing to any such conclusion, that it is difficult to understand how a man of Sir James Westland's penetration can have put forward anything so irrelevant for the purpose. . . . . What does the review show? That, during the period concerned, the revenue covered not only the ordinary expenditure of the Government, but also an extraordinary expenditure on war, special defence works, famine relief, and railway construction, of Rx. 50,988,294, and left a balance of Rx. 3,376,861. In short, during the twenty years, the Government, as Sir James Westland puts it, more than paid its way, by the amount in question. It is obvious, however, that this fact, in itself, justifies no conclusion whatever as to whether the country needs financial assistance or not. Before we can form any reasonable opinion on that point, we require to know, not merely that the Government paid its way out of revenue, but how it obtained the revenue which enabled it to pay its way, and what have been the consequences to the people of its realisation. In other words, we require to know the history of taxation and its effect on the welfare of the country, as well as upon that of the various classes of taxpayers, during the period; and regarding these points Sir James Westland very discreetly abstains from telling us a single word. . . . . As a matter of fact, we know only too well that it has been largely by imposing new and enhancing old taxation that the Government has been able to achieve the result of which he boasts. To say nothing of the heavy increase that has taken place in local taxation, which has helped in no inconsiderable degree, to relieve the pressure on Imperial revenue, or of the increase in the excise duties, the period embraced in the review has seen the income tax re-imposed, ostensibly to meet a temporary emergency; the salt tax largely enhanced on similar grounds; the customs duties re-imposed. The most that the Government can claim is that in spite of all these additions to the burden it has to bear, the back of the camel is not yet broken.

"Financial Legerdemain."—*The Hindu.*

No impartial person reading Sir James Westland's financial statement will conclude that the financial condition of India is prosperous or satisfactory. On the other hand it is plain that the Government is carried on with borrowed funds, the current revenues being insufficient to meet the ordinary expenditure which grows by leaps and bounds. Sir James Westland may use all his power of financial legerdemain to mislead

the public and make them believe that the financial difficulties are only temporary and due to special causes. But his own figures tell a different story, and those that do not get puzzled at the maze of figures and technicalities with which the financial statement bristles will plainly see that if the Government stops borrowing in any single year it must declare itself a bankrupt. It is plain that it is no longer able to meet its annual sterling obligations without adding to its permanent sterling debts, and that though it screws the last pie out of the famishing rayat and levies its taxes at the highest rates possible, its military expenditure and its expenditure in England have grown into such enormous dimensions that the ordinary revenues are no longer sufficient to enable the Government to defray them without borrowing.

"Twenty Years' Indian Finance."—*Times of India.*

Readers of this year's Budget whose attention was arrested by the sub-heading "Review of Twenty Years' Finance," must have been astonished, at first sight, by the *tour de force* that the Financial Member had executed in compressing such a review into two pages and a half, and one table. We have not to go far, however, in a study of this brief abstract and chronicle of our financial times without seriously doubting if the Budget might not with advantage be divested of so partial and incomplete an essay. It is easy to see with what purpose it was composed. A few months ago, when India seemed in the very trough of the financial sea, the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave voice to the sympathy of England in a conditional undertaking that if the country were in sore need of help we might count upon the generosity of Parliament. We are not yet by any means upon the crest of the wave, but the situation has in the interval changed for the better, and the home Government, apparently with the ready assistance of the Government of India, have come to the conclusion that India is not in a sufficiently serious financial condition to have any claim upon the help of Parliament. Some weeks ago the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Lord George Hamilton spoke of accounts from India which indicated a material improvement in the position of affairs—accounts which seem to find an echo in Sir James Westland's introductory paragraph, wherein he says "the revenue returns of January were sufficient in themselves to show that the crisis has passed, and gave hopes of the early return of prosperous times." We must not too greatly concern ourselves with the motives by which responsible public utterances are inspired; but it is plain that this twenty years' review was intended only as a justification before home opinion of the refusal of the Indian Government to admit that the country is in need of extraneous financial help. The prominent place which is given in the review to Sir John Strachey's familiar plea for maintaining the financial independence of India would give colour to this view even without the Financial Member's frank admission that one of his objects in setting out this general review of our finances is to point out "how little occasion there is for our seeking assistance from her Majesty's Government in aid of our revenue account." Sir James Westland must not complain if even the most friendly of his critics remind him that this review is likely to be accepted much more readily by people at home, who know nothing of our financial story, than by those upon whose ears it has been the first to fall. If it is good policy for India still to refrain from asking for the help of the British Exchequer this is certainly not because of the facts and arguments set forth in this review, which, to speak frankly, is too incomplete and one-sided to supply the ground-work for any decision of moment.

A review of the financial policy of any period—and especially of a period embracing two decades—must exhibit, if it is to have any seriously informing character, not only the growth of income and expenditure and of debt, but the extent to which the situation has been affected by changes in taxation. This is so rudimentary a truth that one would have to ask Sir James Westland's pardon for putting it on record but for the fact that he has altogether ignored it. Necessary as this must be in any statement which professed to give an exact summary of financial history, it becomes doubly necessary when the purpose of the summary is to show, not the financial facts alone of a particular period, but their bearing upon the momentous practical question how far the country is able to bear unaided the special burdens which are falling upon it. It is of only partial relevance to this great question, then, to be told that in the last twenty years our revenue has exceeded our ordinary expenditure by over fifty crores. The fact, as stated, has a very limited significance, for our financial position is determined not by our ordinary expenditure, but by our extraordinary. It is from this that arise deficits, the curtailment of needed outlay, the piling up of burdens upon a highly-taxed and poverty-stricken population. Let us, however, attach all the significance that Sir James Westland would like us to attach to the sufficiency of revenue to meet ordinary expenditure. Is nothing to be said—even for the benefit of a public in England who are to be satisfied that India needs no help—of the history of Indian taxation during the period? Had the natural growth in expenditure been met by a natural growth in the revenue, the comparison would have been as encouraging as the Financial Member appears desirous of making it. But these twenty years, besides being years of steady increase in the revenue-yielding capacity of all sources of taxation, except opium, have been marked also by frequent additions to taxation. We should like to think that the increase of five crores in the land revenue during the last twenty years was entirely natural—that it invariably corresponded to a rise in the productive capacity of the land and in the market value of its products, of which Government was getting only its fair share. But who that has carefully followed so much of the operations of the Settlement Department as may have come within his reach can be confident that this is the case? However this may be, the last twenty years have seen large additions to the revenue which have been entirely independent of its ordinary increment. An income tax and the augmentation of the salt duty came in prompt succession to the increase of the army in 1885; a tax on petroleum, though its incidence is light, has brought another of the necessaries of life upon the tariff. The more recently revived duties on cotton goods violate the same canon of sound finance, and are a burden distinctly felt by the people. It is not easy to calculate the total amount that has been collected in new taxation during the period of Sir James Westland's review. Mr. Stephen Jacob, in his evidence before the Welby Commission last year, estimated that in the ten years preceding 1896 it was about twenty-three crores, and to this the increased taxation on cotton goods would have to be added. Thus practically half of the fifty crores excess of revenue over ordinary expenditure, of which Sir James Westland speaks, disappears if the revenue is taken on the basis upon which it stood at the beginning of the period, and instead of being Rx. 3,376,000 to the good on the whole account at the end of the period, we should have been more than twenty crores on the wrong side if we had relied only upon the natural increment in our revenues to meet a growing expenditure. It may be said that this is a highly supposititious view of the case. Yet it is not more supposititious than some of the Financial Member's own reflexions—as the paragraph, for instance, in which he tells us that "if we had had no famine relief expenditure to meet we should have borne all the war charges out of our ordinary revenue, and have paid our way."

The defect in Sir James Westland's presentation of the case is serious for this reason. It keeps out of view the important fact that if India has during the last twenty years paid its way—an assumption which may be vigorously contested—this has been done only by additions to the area of taxation which are as open to objection upon practical as upon scientific grounds. We know now that the process can be carried no farther. Only an unscrupulous and inconsiderate ingenuity can invent for us new sources of taxation. Our existing revenues, if we nourish them and stimulate them, will grow rapidly enough to meet all reasonable demands upon them. But it is hopeless to go outside of them. Whatever the next twenty years may have in store in India we cannot contemplate a re-enactment of the financial story of the past twenty, in which new taxation to the extent of twenty-five crores will be brought in aid of the Exchequer. The real lesson which stands out from Sir James Westland's review is not that which it was intended to convey—namely, the ability of India to dispense with financial assistance from home. If it teaches anything it teaches the imperative need for relying henceforth upon the existing *cadre* of taxation, and not upon additions to it. It is dangerously delusive to flatter ourselves with the belief, even when vouched for on the highest official authority, that India's financial record of the last twenty years is a better one than can be shown by almost any country in the world. This is emphatically not the right view to take of a fiscal policy whose distinguishing feature is that it has brought us to the extreme limits of the area within which taxation can be levied with profit to the revenue. It would have been an unpleasant truth, but a truth all the same, to put in the forefront of this review that in every step which India has lately taken to increase her revenue she has had to subject to taxation the necessaries of life. In every country in the world with which the Government of India would allow of a comparison, this is a policy which is strenuously avoided, and Sir James Westland's boast only invites unpleasant contrasts. Nor is the scientific value of this review enhanced by its concluding sentence. We are therein told that "we have every prospect, as the Budget Estimates for next year have shown, of wiping out, within a single year, so far as our financial condition is concerned, the evil effects of the year of calamities through which we have just passed." If this is intended only to emphasise the fact that a surplus of a little less than a crore is counted upon for the ensuing year a less jubilant note might have been struck. Taking the sentence as it stands, it carries the impossible implication that the large additions to debt which have been made during this year of war and famine would be liquidated during the next twelve months.

The Growth of Taxation in India.

With reference to the article reproduced above, the *Times of India* (March 25), printed the following letter from Mr. D. E. Wacha:—

To the Editor of the "Times of India."

Sir,—I entirely agree with you when in your leader of to-day you state that "a review of the financial policy of any period

—and especially of a period embracing two decades—must exhibit, if it is to have any seriously informing character, not only the growth of income and expenditure and of debt, but the extent to which the situation has been affected by changes in taxation." The Finance Minister has taken the pains to inform us that India has not only been able to pay its way but had a surplus over ordinary expenditure to the extent of fifty-one crores, which have been spent on war, famine, and the construction of protective railways. Now all this may sound very pleasant to the British taxpayers who are blissfully ignorant of the a b c of Indian finance, but they are hardly the people to detect the obvious financial fallacy in which the statement of Sir James Westland is involved. I do not blame them for their ignorance when we all know here as a matter of fact how even Secretaries of State, after being well coached by the permanent officials of the India Office, flounder in errors.

It is true that India has paid its way. So, too, how many debtor countries. But the crucial question in reference to this complacent assertion is, what have been the ways and means of paying? Is the expenditure paid out of ordinary revenue, or is it supplemented by fresh taxation? Or is it that deficits are partially met from such taxation and partly from public borrowing? We have at this very moment before us the fact that six millions sterling of remittances due for the current year have to be discharged by Treasury bills. And such is the condition of revenue and expenditure for the coming official year that the liability could not be paid off from income, and has necessarily to be discharged by loans, thus adding to the permanent debt, already heavy enough in all conscience, and annually entailing no inconsiderable interest charge on the ordinary revenues of the empire.

The essential point, therefore, to know in connexion with the statement of Sir James Westland is how far enhancement of old taxation and the imposition of new helped the Government of India to pay its way during the last twenty years. This is indeed an obvious query, which must strike even the veriest tyro in public finance. And I think, sir, you correctly echo the popular voice when you further observe in the same leader that "this is so rudimentary a truth that one would have to ask Sir James Westland's pardon for putting it on record, but for the fact that he has altogether ignored it." But those who have followed the course of Indian finance during the last two decades are perfectly aware of the salient fact which Sir James has so adroitly ignored. I see that in its issue of the 22nd instant, the *Statesman* has not failed to refer to this "obvious" fact. Says that journal: "We hope to show another day that the figures, even accepting them as accurate, are very far from serving any such purpose" as Sir James intends. And here is what the *Pioneer* observes in its issue of even date: "As it stands, this survey of twenty years' finance is obviously incomplete and misleading. We have paid our way, it is true, but surely the Finance Minister ought to have reminded us that in doing so we have enormously increased taxation. Knock off the proceeds of new or enhanced taxation within the last fifteen years, and where would be the balance of which Sir James Westland is so proud?" Exactly so. You observe that during the last ten years alone, commencing from 1885-6, Mr. Stephen Jacob, in his evidence before the Royal Commission, has observed that this enhanced and new taxation was 23 crores, besides the yield of the cotton duties for the last two years. You will please excuse me if I for a moment refer to this statement before I proceed to show the entire figures of additional taxation during the last twenty years. In my evidence before the Royal Commission, while elaborating my statement that the appalling military expenditure of the last twelve years, in all its ramifications, was the *principal* disturbing factor of the embarrassed condition of Indian finance, while exchange was only a secondary element, I observed that the new taxation was $23\frac{3}{4}$ crores. Mr. Jacob, in rebutting this part of the evidence, took exception to my figures, and stated that it was $22\frac{1}{4}$ crores. For the sake of better elucidation I will here quote *his* own figures—from 1885-86 to 1894-95. (*Vide* answer to question 20,190):

	Rx.
Assessed Taxes	9,020,000
Salt Duty	10,281,000
Customs	3,065,000
Total	22,366,000

But these figures only relate to taxation for ten years commencing from 1885-86. I have now computed the entire taxation, enhanced and fresh imposed since 1878-79, and the results, *after taking into consideration the remission of duties during the same period*, are as under:—

FROM 1878-79 TO 1897-98.	Rx.	Rx.
Salt		10,418,000
Provincial Rates		15,156,000
Assessed Taxes		17,034,000
		42,608,000
Less Customs Loss on account of old duties remitted in 1878 and 1882 ..	11,159,000	
Deduct fresh duties imposed since 1893-4	8,496,000	
		2,663,000
Net Enhanced New Taxation ..		39,945,000

It will be seen from the above figures (they are open to correction if I am wrong) that the new taxation during the twenty years amounted to nearly 40 crores. The rest of the increase of nearly 11 crores may be fairly put down to the normal growth of revenue, save on the item of opium, which is steadily diminishing and soon threatens to be a negligible quantity in future budgets.

	Rx.
Growth in Land Revenue	6,032,000
,, Stamp..	1,813,000
,, Excise..	3,259,000
,, Other heads	2,300,000
	13,404,000
Less diminished opium receipts.. ..	3,853,000
	9,551,000

These figures speak for themselves, and I now leave the enlightened public to infer how far Sir James Westland was justified in making the misleading assertion that he did. It is evident that the shibboleth that "India pays its way" was intended for "home consumption." But even the British taxpayer cannot long remain uneducated on this point.—Yours, etc.

D. E. WACHA.

ET CAETERA.

The P. and O. s.s. "Caledonia," which arrived at Brindisi from Bombay on April 6, had amongst other passengers the following:—Hon. Justice Sale, Lady Sandhurst, Sir James Mackay, Lady Carnegie, Mr. V. S. Doshi, Mr. M. R. Jardine, and Mr. N. Wadia.

The "Caledonia" leaves London for the return voyage on April 26, and her list of passengers includes the following:—Lieut. G. N. Parteath, Lieut. Cassels, Captain Hatherell, Lieut. F. C. Keiby, and Lieut. G. H. Preston.

Mr. J. M. Maclean, M.P., will preside at the next meeting of the Indian Section of the Society of Arts on Thursday afternoon next, when Mr. Horace Bell, formerly Consulting Engineer for Railways to the Government of India, will read a paper on "Recent Railway Policy in India." Sir David Barbour (late Finance Minister in India) takes the chair on April 28, when Sir Edward Sassoon reads a paper on "India and her Currency." Sir Alfred Lyall's paper on "Chartered Companies and Colonisation" will be read at the concluding meeting of the Section on May 19, Mr. Henry M. Stanley, M.P., presiding.

The *Pioneer* writes:—While disorder must be put down with a strong hand, no reasonable observer can fail to recognise that the measures which it has been found necessary to adopt in Bombay for the purpose of extirpating the plague, involve much that must always be eminently distasteful and vexatious from the Native point of view; and we are glad to find from our Bombay correspondent's telegram that an endeavour is being made to modify the regulations in a way that will render them less obnoxious. Lord Sandhurst announced to an assemblage of representative Natives on Tuesday that, instead of insisting on house to house inspection, the Government will accept an undertaking from the leaders of the various communities that due notice of every case of plague or suspicious illness shall be voluntarily given to the authorities. A Native committee, composed of representatives of the Hindu, Mahometan and Parsee communities, will sit daily to investigate all complaints regarding plague administration. Finally, merchants, provided with passes, will be allowed freely to leave and enter Bombay for trade purposes.

Before the year is much older the Government's nominations of successors to Lords Elgin and Aberdeen will (the *Pall Mall Gazette* says) have to be submitted for her Majesty's approval. Though no doubt Lord George Hamilton's views and wishes will have their proper weight in the choice that is made, as a matter of ministerial etiquette, it is generally understood that the selection of Indian Viceroy rests with the Prime Minister. No doubt Lord Salisbury will exercise his privilege as soon as he returns from Beaulieu, for Lord Elgin's term of office expires at the end of the year. Some considerable time since we mentioned several names from among which, we observed, his successor was likely to be taken. These, we think, may now be reduced to two—namely, the Right Hon. George Curzon and Lord Balfour of Burleigh—and we shall not be surprised if one or the other of these is chosen. Mr. Curzon will be forty next year; Lord Balfour of Burleigh will then be fifty. Both are well-known public men, and both have many admirable qualifications for the position, which, it is scarcely necessary to add, will during the next five years be one of exceptional difficulty and responsibility.

Piper Findlater, it is said, has had another offer of marriage, this time from a lady who is well known in Indian society, and who not only offers the piper a home, but says she will willingly place at his disposal her income of five thousand a year. Findlater does not, however, appear to be unduly elated by this offer. He is well on the road to recovery, and entertains his companions in Netley Hospital by practice on his pipes. The chief officer in command of the Gordon Highlanders at Aldershot has visited the hospital, and had a cheering interview with the patients.

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25. Surat	Surat and Broach Districts, with Baroda	Hardevram Nanabhai Haridas, Esq., and Bhagubai Dayabhai, Esq., Surat.
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